

THE NATION

AND ATHENÆUM

VOL. XLII.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14, 1928.

No. 15

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THE NATION is edited and published at 38, Great James Street, London, W.C.1.

Chairman: J. M. KEYNES.

Editor: H. D. HENDERSON.

Telephone: Business Manager: Museum 5551.

Editorial: Museum 5552.

Telegrams: "Nationetta, Holb. London."

Annual Subscription, Thirty Shillings, including postage to any part of the world. MSS. should be addressed to the Editor, and accompanied by stamped and addressed envelope for return.

EVENTS OF THE WEEK

THE inhabitants of big cities are accustomed to regard the forces of nature much as they regard the wild beasts in the Zoological Gardens—as well-tamed, harmless, and a little pathetic. It comes, therefore, as a shock to find that they are still capable of so sudden and formidable an assertion of rude strength as to drown fourteen people in their beds in the heart of London, and to call forth, incidentally, a second Grace Darling in the person of Miss Franckeiss. The death-roll has served to distract attention from what is a hardly less important consequence—the widespread devastation in poor homes along the riverside. The Press is naturally full of demands that effective precautions should be taken against the recurrence of such calamities; and it seems probable that some public inquiry will result. We hope, however, that the special case of London, which represents an extremely unusual combination of circumstances, will not distract atten-

tion from the much more flagrant neglect to provide against the annual flooding in the Thames valley.

* * *

The course of events in Lancashire is such as to suggest that the cotton trade may add another to the long list of historic examples of the proverb "Quos deus vult perdere, prius dementat." Indeed, the old tag fits the psychology of the case with remarkable closeness. It is when severe though far from overwhelming adversity has produced the semi-hysterical condition of saying "We must do something" that collective organisms, like individuals, hit out wildly and bring destruction upon themselves. The hope that the manufacturers might act as a restraining influence upon the spinners has proved illusory. They have made common cause in demanding from the operatives 25 per cent. off the standard lists and a 52½-hour week. Indeed the only reservations which the manufacturers have to make to the spinners' proposals under these heads are: (1) to demand "a larger percentage reduction in the case of the higher-paid operatives," and (2) to observe that the wage-cuts proposal will only be sufficient if the operatives accept the longer hours. The texts of the reports which have been issued by the two organizations confirm the forecasts that the business part of these documents would be confined to wages and hours, although there would be much general talk about other matters. As general talk, there is much that is good in the manufacturers' report. The passages which analyze the defects of the existing merchanting system and call for "a complete change of outlook and method" are, indeed, so intelligent as to be puzzling, until one remembers how collective documents are put together. For, clearly, these passages were drafted by someone who has not taken leave of his senses. It is not very reassuring to know that the manufacturers' committee includes at least one such individual; but it is the only reassuring feature that can be discerned in these Reports.

* * *

Evidence accumulates that the hours demand, which we had at first assumed must be intended only as a bargaining counter, is the demand on which the infatuated Bourbons of Lancashire have most set their hearts. The whole stress of the Master Spinners' Report is laid on hours. It invokes the "remarkable parallel" of Massachusetts. Massachusetts, too, has a 48-hour week. Massachusetts, too, is losing trade—to the Southern States. The moral is obvious. It matters nothing to those who reason so that, even on paper, the saving in overhead charges from an extra 4½ hours is not large. It matters nothing that, for most of the time these last last years, most of the Lancashire mills have been working much less than the standard 48 hours, that, indeed, short-time has been systematically organized by the Masters' Federation, so that in

practice there is not likely to be any saving in overhead charges at all. It matters nothing that the operatives, having now become accustomed to breakfasting at home before proceeding to work, are not likely to agree without a struggle to revert to the old, unpleasant system. It matters nothing that the British Government—even the present British Government—is pledged to ratify the Washington Convention. Or, stay, perhaps they do take that into account. Perhaps there is the calculation that by insisting on longer hours now they may put an end to all pretence on the part of the present Government of ratifying that Convention.

* * *

But it is difficult to credit the cotton employers with any very clear-sighted calculation of anything. If they had looked ahead at all, it must surely have occurred to them that their demands must almost certainly lead to an inquiry under the Industrial Courts Act, that the verdict of such an inquiry must almost certainly be against them, that public opinion will be solidly against them, that they can only hope to enforce their demands after a prolonged and exceptionally bitter conflict, and that the conflict and the bad relations which it must leave behind will mean a further large and permanent loss of export trade. There is indeed the further possibility that even the present Government may be moved—as it certainly ought to be—to some sort of action. The situation is serious. "The decline of the cotton trade," as the manufacturers' report rightly declares, "is a matter of national concern." And it is a matter of national concern that those who control its destinies should be prevented from hastening its decline. The time has come, we believe, when the Government should intervene, and insist on the effective reorganization of the industry, promising to supply the compulsory powers required to override the recalcitrant minorities who have hitherto obstructed every constructive project. The war-time experiment of a Cotton Control Board might appropriately be repeated. Drastic action is now, we believe, the only alternative to a serious disaster.

* * *

The present and future relations between the hospitals and the State were reviewed in two articles by Dr. Graham Little and Mr. Walter Spencer in the *TIMES* of Tuesday and Wednesday of this week. Considerable uneasiness has been caused to these and other supporters of the voluntary hospital system by Mr. Neville Chamberlain's suggestion that there should be "consultation in various areas with a view to arriving at an agreed plan for institutional provision which would enable each kind of hospital to play its proper part in meeting the ever-increasing need of the people for hospital accommodation." This has been taken in some quarters as a menace to the independence of the voluntary hospitals, though Mr. Chamberlain has expressly disclaimed any intention of encroaching upon their freedom. It is clear, at any rate, that something will have to be done to increase the efficiency of the Poor Law hospitals, and that they are likely to be handed over to the municipalities. Now the voluntary teaching hospitals fear the competition of municipal hospitals supported out of public funds, and Dr. Graham Little and Mr. Spencer therefore come forward with a proposal for co-ordination and co-operation between the voluntary and municipal hospitals under an "Advisory Council for Hospital Services," composed apparently (for the Metropolitan area) of representatives of the Ministry of Health, the London County Council, and the voluntary hospitals. But the

ultimate control must, they say, be left to the voluntary hospitals.

* * *

"It will probably have been noticed," write Dr. Little and Mr. Spencer, in conclusion, "that we are throughout our proposals keeping bureaucratic control at bay, and that, indeed, is their prime motive." That is a candid admission, but it will not satisfy those of us who have no particular bias towards or against public control and seek only for an efficient hospital service. These writers pass lightly over the fact that the voluntary hospitals have long waiting lists of would-be patients, and remark complacently that "the competition for admission to the beds of teaching hospitals is really brought about by their continually growing reputation, and is a sign of vigorous life and not a detriment to them as is sometimes pretended. They would cope with the increased demand if they could; it is merely lack of money which prevents them from doing so to the extent to which they would wish to do." But is not this an admission that the voluntary principle is breaking down? Is it not a serious matter that patients in urgent need of hospital treatment should be left to grow worse—perhaps to die—because the hospitals lack the funds to supply adequate accommodation? Hospitals are surely a vital necessity in any ordered State, and if they cannot be efficiently maintained by private charity they should certainly be a charge on the public funds, and therefore under public control.

* * *

The arguments advanced against the "bureaucratic control" of hospitals are singularly unconvincing. Eminent physicians and surgeons who give their services freely to the voluntary hospitals would demand, we are told, high salaries from a public authority. But Dr. Little and Mr. Spencer also tell us that "the presence of students attracts the very best talent to the medical staff, partly because the private practice depends largely upon the support of the future practitioner who is trained at the hospital, and partly because the progressive man in medicine and surgery is singularly stimulated by the contact with eager students. . . ." Would these attractions be removed by public control? Again, after an enthusiastic description of Sir Almroth Wright's achievements at St. Mary's Hospital, Dr. Little and his collaborator say, "We are unable to see how this department could have been fitted into any State institution." We do not share their difficulty of vision, especially as the earlier and not the least fruitful part of Sir Almroth Wright's research work was carried out, under State control, in a military hospital. Better arguments than these must be found if the detached layman is to be convinced of the necessity for leaving the hospitals, whatever their shortcomings, in private hands.

* * *

M. Briand's reply to Mr. Kellogg's Note on the "outlawry of war" is in effect a rejection of the latter's proposals, and is probably intended to be one. As the *JOURNAL* has admitted, M. Briand had not even adhered to his own original proposal to America, in which he did not limit the repudiation of war to "wars of aggression." The reception of Mr. Kellogg's proposal in the French Press, with few exceptions, has been intensely hostile, in many cases insulting, and the papers of the Left have been the most hostile of all. Both the *TEMPS* and the *MATIN* have shown some alarm at this attitude, which is hardly prudent. No doubt it is annoying that the little plan for putting France and America alone on a pinnacle of virtue above the rest

of the world—without any cost to France—should have fallen through, but it would have been wiser to conceal the annoyance and not to reveal so clearly that M. Briand's motive was not exclusively attachment to peace. M. Briand has miscalculated as badly as he miscalculated at the Washington Conference, and his failure has not strengthened his position in France. The notion, however, which seems to be prevalent in France, that Mr. Kellogg saw through M. Briand's motives, is probably quite mistaken. It is much more probable that Mr. Kellogg sincerely believed that M. Briand would like to extend the "outlawry of war" to the whole world.

* * *

It is discouraging to find the *VOLONTÉ*, one of the French papers most favourable to an understanding with Germany, insisting that there must be compensation for the evacuation of the Rhineland. The compensation that the *VOLONTÉ* would prefer is that proposed by M. Paul-Boncour at the recent French Socialist Congress—permanent international control of the German demilitarized zone. Perhaps Germany would agree to that if France would accept a demilitarized zone on her side of the frontier under the same control, but the idea of reciprocity in such matters seems inconceivable to the French mind. Failing such reciprocity, Germany would certainly not agree to international control, and ought not to be asked to do so. It does not seem to have occurred to anybody in France that the occupation of the Rhineland is an Allied, not a French, occupation, and that Great Britain, for instance, has as much right to a voice in the matter as France. Supposing we said that we would not consent to further guarantees for France until she disarmed and abandoned her plans for fortifying her new Eastern frontier!

* * *

The Government of Iraq has decided to send an expedition to protect the inhabitants of districts adjoining the southern frontier from Wahabi raids. This expedition is to be supported by a detachment of the Royal Air Force. The situation is a little delicate, in view of the friendly relations between this country and Ibn Saud. At the same time, the British Government has a definite responsibility for the defence of Iraq, and the raids from the Nejd have become a serious matter. They are not mere camel-lifting forays of the ordinary type, but seem to be inspired rather by fanaticism than the desire for loot, and the Wahabi treatment of heretics outrages all the canons of desert warfare. No quarter is given to combatants, and there have been serious massacres of non-combatants, including women, which have spread panic all along the border. The responsible chief is practically in rebellion against the King of the Hedjaz, and, although Ibn Saud speaks of sending an expedition against him, the attitude of other powerful tribes in the north is likely to delay his action. Meanwhile, the Government of Iraq is clearly bound to give protection to its subjects, and the assistance of the British forces could hardly be refused.

* * *

The negotiations for the resumption of intercourse between Poland and Lithuania do not seem likely to make very rapid progress if M. Valdemaras maintains his present attitude. He is willing to discuss proposals for a commercial agreement; but no goods originating in the Vilna district must be allowed to enter the Lithuanian market. Postal communications may be resumed; but the Lithuanian Post Office cannot receive

any letters addressed to Vilna. In all technical agreements there must be provision for excluding the Vilna district from their benefits. Lithuania is ready to receive a Polish Minister, but only in Vilna, as the Lithuanian capital. Unfortunately, M. Valdemaras appears to speak, in this matter, for the bulk of the Lithuanian people. Indeed, many Lithuanian nationalists contend that, despite what happened at Geneva, the recession of Vilna should be a condition precedent to any discussions at all. Meanwhile, M. Zaleski, the Polish Foreign Minister, is busy proclaiming his readiness to treat and his optimism as to results. It is easy, of course, for Poland to be magnanimous—she has got Vilna. All the same, the persistent refusal of Lithuania to recognize the accomplished fact seems to be hardly prudent, or even dignified.

* * *

The Simon Commission sails for India in a few days and is due to begin its preliminary inquiries in the first week of February. Although there is serious misgiving on the part of the Indian commercial community and the more moderate political bodies as to the threatened boycott, there are no signs of a leaning towards co-operation among the political organizations. It is recognized that the Egyptian parallel of eight years ago is being worked with great effect. The politically minded Indians are told that the Egyptian Nationalists boycotted the Milner Commission and were thereby enabled to force the offer of better terms. The fact is not so: but if it were, the analogy would not hold because the problems and situations of the two countries cannot be compared. The hope in India now turns upon the first steps taken by the Commission and the measure of Sir John Simon's success in convincing the intelligentsia of the *bona fides* of himself and his colleagues. Upon that matter there should be little doubt, since the essence of the task is to prove that the fullest Indian co-operation will be welcomed and provided for.

* * *

The Pan-American Congress opens at Havana on Monday, with an inaugural address by President Coolidge, whose visit to Cuba is an unusual event. This Congress is the sixth to be held since the formation of the Pan-American League, and it is a safe guess that it will be concerned with the problems of the Western hemisphere much more realistically than any of its predecessors. The last Pan-American Congress was held in 1923. In the interval the economic empire of the United States has been immensely expanded over Central and South America, while the attitude of the State Department towards Mexico and the smaller Central American Republics has tended to solidify the sentiment of Latin America in opposition to the United States. In Mexico to-day Mr. Dwight Morrow, the new Ambassador, is leaving nothing undone in his efforts to establish a new friendliness. This will have its good effect at Havana, but Nicaragua cannot fail to be an irritant. Since the first encounters with General Sandino three weeks ago large reinforcements of United States Marines have been dispatched to Nicaragua, but these have not availed to prevent a fresh revolt in the North near the Honduras frontier.

* * *

As we go to press, we learn with great regret of the death on Wednesday evening of Mr. Thomas Hardy in his eighty-eighth year. We shall publish an appreciation of the man and his work by Mr. Leonard Woolf in our next issue.

THE ATHENÆUM CENTENARY

THE ATHENÆUM first appeared in January, 1828, from offices at 147, Strand, near Somerset House; and we shall celebrate the event by publishing next week an Athenæum Centenary Supplement, containing special articles and reproducing features of interest from early issues. In its first two and a half years the paper underwent numerous vicissitudes. Within a few months of a promising beginning its founder and first editor, the indefatigable James Silk Buckingham, conceived the further project of a new London evening newspaper, and was soon compelled by lack of capital to part with the ATHENÆUM. Its purchasers were Frederick Denison Maurice and a group of friends, which included Carlyle's friend, John Sterling; and Maurice and Sterling edited the paper in succession during the next two years. The ATHENÆUM, however, did not prosper under their control. In the words of Dr. Henry Stebbing, one of the original company of contributors:—

"Endowed as they were with the noblest talents, they [Maurice and Sterling] knew little of the peculiar qualities and means essential to success in such speculations. The ATHENÆUM rapidly failed in circulation. It passed for a short time into the hands of Mr. Atkinson. . . . I remember his coming and offering me the proprietorship and back stock of the ATHENÆUM for just £100.

Dr. Stebbing declined the offer. For the time being the paper was acquired by Mr. Holmes, the printer, Sterling remaining editor; but a few months later there began the regime which was to mark the end of the paper's troubles and to win for it a prominent position in the literary life of the nineteenth century. In June, 1830, Charles Wentworth Dilke, the friend of Keats and the grandfather of the Liberal statesman, became editor and part proprietor, acquiring the controlling interest of a three-fourths share in the following year. Under his firm, capable, and erudite editorial direction, the ATHENÆUM speedily won prestige as a pioneer of genuinely independent literary criticism. Under his courageous and enterprising business direction the financial difficulties which had beset the paper melted away no less speedily. He halved the price of the paper; he increased its size; and by January, 1832, he was able to boast of a success "more rapid and triumphant than was perhaps ever known."

Dilke relinquished the editorship in May, 1846, when he was called in to rescue another infant paper from destruction by taking over the business management of the DAILY NEWS, which had been started by Charles Dickens a few months earlier. But his connection with the ATHENÆUM remained close and active; indeed, in the 'fifties he began for the first time (for he thought the practice undesirable in an editor) to contribute to its columns. On his death the proprietorship passed to his son, the first baronet, and a few years afterwards to his grandson, the late Sir Charles Dilke, who faithfully carried on the tradition established by his grandfather. Sir Charles Dilke maintained throughout his busy life the most intimate contact with the ATHENÆUM, reviewing regularly books on labour and social questions and other topics which he had made peculiarly his own, reading through

the proofs of the paper week by week, and serving on several occasions as acting editor during the editor's absence on holiday. Thus for more than eighty years from 1830 to Sir Charles Dilke's death in 1911, the paper was associated, in much more than a formal way, with the name of Charles Wentworth Dilke.

Nor was this its only enduring family connection. In August, 1831, the ATHENÆUM contained an advertisement for "an active and intelligent young man to assist in the Business of the Office of this Paper." The advertisement was answered by John Francis, aged twenty, who had just completed his apprenticeship at Marlborough's Newspaper Office. Francis obtained the post. Within two months he had been appointed Publisher and Business Manager, and this position he retained for over fifty years. On his death in 1882 he was succeeded by his son, John Collins Francis, who continued to manage the paper until Sir Charles Dilke's death in 1911, and who, in the form of a biography of his father, wrote an invaluable history of the first fifty years of the ATHENÆUM. Another son of John Francis became the printer of the paper, having been apprenticed to the Mr. Holmes mentioned above, and was succeeded by his son, Mr. J. Edward Francis. It was to these two members of the Francis family, Mr. John Collins Francis, the publisher, and Mr. Edward Francis, the printer, that Sir Charles Dilke left the controlling interest in the paper; and the Francis connection continued for some years longer. Nor, while we are referring to the prolonged associations which have marked the ATHENÆUM's history, can we omit the name of Mr. John Randall, who entered the service of the paper in 1875, served it as proof-reader and sub-editor for the remainder of its separate existence and continued after its fusion with THE NATION in 1921 until his retirement two years ago, to assist those who now conduct the paper with his experience, his scholarly accuracy, and his devoted care.

We have said that the ATHENÆUM early won prestige as a pioneer of genuinely independent literary criticism. It is, indeed, no exaggeration to say that it created the traditions which are now firmly established in all literary journals of repute. The integrity of the reviews which appear to-day in any high-class journal is a matter of course. The reviewer may perhaps be careless or unfair; he may conceivably be swayed improperly by personal prejudice or by the prejudices of the coterie in which he moves. But there is at least no room for suspicion that any commercial consideration enters in; that anything will be said or left unsaid from a desire to please publishers and attract advertisement. Nor, indeed, would most publishers to-day wish matters to be otherwise. It is recognized that the outspoken expression of honest judgments is in the long run no less a service to good publishers than it is a duty to the public. But it was not always so; it was not so before the ATHENÆUM, and nothing seemed more hazardous than the ATHENÆUM's declaration of war against the ruling convention of systematic puffing.

Accordingly, from the speedy success which followed his courageous policy, Charles Wentworth Dilke derived more than ordinary pleasure at the success of

a journalistic enterprise. He felt the deeper satisfaction of the triumph of a worthy cause. In the issue of June 4th, 1831, there appears the following passage from his pen:—

"The ATHENÆUM has now completed a year's struggle for the true interests of Literature. . . . The faithful chronicle of all that is interesting to the Poet and the Philosopher is sought to be preserved in the columns of the ATHENÆUM; and, for the integrity of its Reviews, it has, in these oppressive days, obtained almost a chivalrous character. It is a matter of notoriety that the principal literary papers are the mere *bellows* to the great publishing *forgeries*—and are used but to puff the *works* as they go on. The ATHENÆUM asserts, and will maintain, its independence. It is under the influence of no Publisher, and is in no way swayed by the *trade winds*, that carry all other craft along with them. . . . The Readers of this Journal may be assured that the great cause of truth and intelligence, which is sought to be advocated in these columns, will, in the days to come, experience but a sincerer and more earnest partizan in the ATHENÆUM."

The italics and capitals are those of the original.

High as was the austerity with which Dilke maintained these principles, it was not high enough to please all his collaborators. A poem by Carlyle appeared in the issue of January 7th, 1832, and the fact was duly announced in the week's Contents Bill, provoking the following entry in Carlyle's diary:—

"Jan. 13th, 1832. Last Friday saw my name in large letters at the ATHENÆUM office in Catherine Street; hurried on with downcast eyes as if I had seen myself in the pillory. . . . Why yield even half a hair's breadth to puffing? Abhor it, utterly divorce it, and kick it to the Devil."

In creating new standards of literary criticism, Dilke was assisted not only by his integrity but also by his detachment from the strong politico-literary animosities of the time. In the words of his friend Mr. Thoms, "he had no pet theory to maintain. The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth was the end and object of all his inquiries, and in the search after this he was indefatigable." His freedom from faction no less than from venality enabled him to build up an organ whose judgments carried weight with the reading public as a whole, and which came to occupy a recognized place in English literature. When, for example, the stupendous work of the Dictionary of National Biography was undertaken, the assistance of the ATHENÆUM was sought and given. The lists of the names whom it was proposed to include were published regularly in the journal, and readers were asked to suggest additions, correct errors, &c.

While the ATHENÆUM was first and foremost a literary paper, and consistently eschewed party politics, it was, none the less, an earnest advocate of measures of social and humanitarian reform. It urged prominently and persistently such causes as the reform of the criminal law, the improvement of prisons, sanitation, housing, education; and played no small part in informing opinion and awakening the public conscience on such matters. The spirit which animated the journal may be gauged by the following passage (July 11th, 1846), in which, risking for once the accusation of political comment, it hails the Repeal of the Corn Laws:—

"It is quite unnecessary for the ATHENÆUM to repeat that it has no concern whatever with the politics of party, or even with State politics as such; yet there are occasional phases of the political world which it cannot pass without a word of notice—and the present is one. . . . It is impossible for the ATHENÆUM to omit remarking, in a spirit far higher than that of self-gratulation, that on the banner of a Ministerial leader are, at length,

written in the place of the political cant-words by which the world has been so long led, many of those great principles of moral and social reform for which that paper has, for years, and with unflagging earnestness, been contending. Public education, in its comprehensive sense—the moral treatment of the criminal—the sanitary improvement of our towns and villages—are all measures to an anxious promotion of which the columns of this paper bear large witness—and all make a part of the new Ministerial manifesto. . . . The immediate feeling, after the great struggle in which the world of politicians and philanthropists and economists has just been engaged—and whose triumph has opened not only the markets of the earth, but, we hope, the treasures of the mind—is as if a great calm had fallen down upon the national heart, amid which the voice of wisdom is at length distinctly heard. . . ."

In its attitude towards trade unionism and labour questions the ATHENÆUM was equally in advance of its times. Nor was its far-sightedness confined to social and humanitarian issues. It was quick to appreciate the importance of the remarkable scientific discoveries of the day. It was no less quick to appreciate the significance of the chief industrial developments. In the issue of January 23rd, 1836, we observe with interest an outline map of England, showing the railways which were in operation, those in progress, and those in contemplation, accompanied by a serious warning to investors as to the risks which they were running.

Although the journal of which the ATHENÆUM now forms a part does not place party politics "out of bounds," and although it cannot attempt to treat literature, science, and art with the old comprehensiveness, we trust that these pages are marked by sufficient of the spirit of the old ATHENÆUM to justify the continued use of its name. We make it, certainly, our endeavour to preserve, on the one hand, its high standard of integrity and competence in literary criticism, and, on the other, its serious, objective handling of social and industrial issues, still unhappily apt to be obscured beneath "political cant-words."

LIBERALISM AND MUNICIPAL POLICY

By E. D. SIMON.

IT is a curious commentary on the lack of public interest in municipal elections that no national returns are published as to the results. It is, therefore, exceedingly difficult to find out what has happened.

An examination of such facts as are available, from the point of view of the position of the Liberal Party in the municipal elections, is not encouraging. The LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEWS, as the result of a private inquiry, finds that in about seventy of the chief cities of the country there were returned 435 Conservatives, 234 Labour, 186 Liberals, and 147 Independents. The Conservatives lost 87 seats, Liberals 19. This means that while there is still a substantial representation of Liberalism, it must have been, on the whole, steadily declining for the last fifteen years.

But the most striking thing about municipal Liberalism is the lack of a policy. In some cases Liberals have a pact with the Conservatives to keep out the Socialists; in some cases they tend to work with Labour against the Conservatives; in others there is a real independent Liberal Party. The Liberal Party has made no attempt since the rise of Labour to formulate a local government policy; no guidance whatever is provided from the centre for Liberal candidates and councillors; the only common item of policy is that they stand somewhere between the Labour Party on the left, and the Conservatives on the right.

Let us consider first the policies of these two parties. The Conservatives are invariably the party backed by the ratepayers' associations, whose main, and sometimes sole, object is to keep the rates down. Labour, on the other hand, does not worry much about the rates, but is out for an extension of services. This is a class distinction. On the whole, the Conservatives represent the suburbs, who already get from the municipality all the services it can usefully give them, police protection, good roads, tram and 'bus services, supplies of electricity, gas and water, and protection against infectious disease. There is nothing more that can be done for richer suburbs. All that their residents want, from a selfish point of view, is to get these services as cheaply as possible, and to pay as little as possible to help their poorer neighbours.

Labour, on the other hand, represents the poorer parts, whose needs are by no means fully met by the municipalities to-day. They have all sorts of demands connected with education, public health, open spaces and housing, which must be supplied by the municipality before they will be satisfied.

Another principal plank in the Labour platform is the desire for municipalization. As a matter of principle they are anxious to municipalize everything; equally as a matter of principle the Conservatives are against any municipalization at all. When any extension of municipal trading is proposed the Conservatives automatically denounce it as Socialism, and therefore oppose it on principle; the Labour members agree in regarding it as Socialism, and therefore support it on principle.

"Economy" and municipal trading are the main issues between the Tory and Labour parties in almost every municipal election. These are the two party questions which the public recognize and understand. Of the two "economy" is the most important. Most local elections tend to degenerate into a wrangle between the Tories, who promise relief to the ratepayer, and Labour, who promise new services to the poorer voter. This division is seen in its acutest shape in considering the amount of out-relief to be given by the Guardians to the able-bodied poor.

It does not make for the good government of our cities that the many important issues of local government should be obscured by this class struggle. Surely there is room for an independent party which will fulfil the traditional rôle of Liberalism in consistently putting the interest of the city as a whole above that of any class or section. Liberalism cannot hope to survive in local affairs unless it has a definite policy. The following may serve as a rough outline of such a policy.

1. Nine-tenths of the work of local authorities has nothing to do with party. It is purely a question of carrying on a series of great businesses on efficient and economic lines. Good administration must therefore be the first point in any municipal policy. This involves constant and unremitting care to see that all services are cheaply and efficiently rendered. One of the most important means of securing economy and efficient service is the steady building up of a municipal civil service comparable in status, ability, and traditions to the national civil service.

As regards municipalization, Liberals regard this not as a matter of principle, but as a question of expediency. If any given job can be better done by the municipality it should be done in that way. The only test they recognize is the power to provide cheap and efficient service.

2. As regards progress, the municipality should provide the slum with the services it requires just as effectively as the suburb has been provided for. An equal chance for every child, whatever part of the city it is born in, should be the principal aim.

To achieve this it is necessary to look ahead and to have vision, and not to be afraid of big things such as the clearance of slums, or driving main roads through cities, so as to be able to get the workers in the centre quickly and cheaply out into the country.

3. As regards finance, Liberals consider the present rating system to be so bad as to be indefensible. It is a serious burden on our depressed industries, and grossly unfair in its incidence on the poorer workers. They are in favour of transferring a considerable portion of the burden on rates to national taxation, and, as regards what remains on the rates, of transferring this, as far as practicable, from improvements on to land.

4. As regards powers, they are in favour of immensely increased powers being given to the municipalities, freeing them from the ridiculous restrictions imposed to-day, and encouraging them to take full responsibility for their local affairs.

5. As regards elections to municipal bodies, they should be by the method of Proportional Representation.

Such would seem to be the kind of policy which Liberals should adopt as regards local affairs. It is of the utmost importance for the good government of our cities that the councils should not become merely an arena for the struggle between the slum and the suburb, but that strong Liberal parties should keep constantly in the forefront the wider interest of the community as a whole. This will not happen if a definite Liberal policy is not laid down as a guide to Liberal councillors all over the country. I venture to suggest that the matter is an urgent one, and that serious and immediate consideration should be given to it by the powers that be.

IS SOUTH AFRICA A WHITE MAN'S LAND?

FIFTY years ago Anthony Trollope wrote "South Africa is a country of black men—and not of white men. It has been so; it is so; it will be so." Many people to-day are asking, with a certain uneasiness in their voices, whether Trollope was not right after all. The colour-fate of South Africa has not yet been decided in favour of the white man.

Mr. C. W. Cousins, the Director of the 1921 Census in South Africa, drew attention in his report* to the fact that after immigration has been allowed for, the Bantu races seem to be increasing so rapidly that in fifty years' time, on the most favourable estimate, the European population would be 6,500,000, and the non-European population 16,500,000; while under less favourable conditions the number of Europeans might be less than 4,000,000, and of non-European fully 24,000,000. His conclusion was that the next fifty years, and perhaps even the next twenty-five, would decide the question "whether the white race is to have any part in the ultimate development of South Africa, or whether it is to be entirely outnumbered and crowded out by the aboriginal population." Failing accessions from overseas, the white race "must for ever abandon the prospect of maintaining a white civilization, except as a proportionately diminishing minority and in face of an increasing and at last overwhelming majority. It may then be forced to abandon its domination, or even to abandon the country."

Closer investigation of the data would seem to show that this is an unnecessarily gloomy forecast, for the Bantu

* "Report of the South African Census, 1921," page 28.

rate of increase is slowing down, and will probably continue to do so as the African approximates more and more to European standards of life. It is his increasing capacity rather than his increasing numbers that constitutes a menace.

Already the whole field of unskilled labour has been relegated to the native African. It is he who digs in the mine and on the farm, who builds the roads and carts the bricks, who heaves the coal and tends the cattle, who washes the dishes and cleans the boots, who collects the refuse and delivers the meat. No white man will undertake any heavy manual toil; that is "Kaffir's work." The white man therefore who has neither the capital to be an employer, nor the ability to be a skilled craftsman, must sink below the ranks of unskilled labour and become a loafer and an unemployable. South Africa knows him as "poor white," and it was estimated in 1922 that one-twelfth of the white population of the Union of South Africa belonged to this class. This is the real menace to the position of the white man in South Africa.

A man who is unable to be an employer or a skilled artisan in England can dig and fetch and carry, and can be a self-respecting "working man," with his place in the economic and social life, but in South Africa he does not dig or fetch or carry; he becomes an unemployable or a parasite. This considerable section of the European population is deteriorating, and the children are said to include an alarming percentage of mental defectives.

The field of unskilled work has passed completely out of the white hands, and the field of semi-skilled toil is passing. This is due partly to the increasing capacity of the African, but more to the pressure of economic conditions. The white man demands, indeed needs, a very much larger wage than the native African. The latter can maintain his family and his own industrial efficiency on a wage that would scarcely keep a white man alive. The black can underlive the white. In periods of industrial depression the employers find it necessary to close down or to dilute their white labour with black. And wherever the economic pressure is acute it is only a matter of time before the white man will be ousted. The process of white attrition has begun, and decay must quicken as the years pass. Unskilled work has gone, semi-skilled work is going, and even skilled work is threatened.

The native African is receiving education to-day, both the education of the schools and the education of general contact with white life. He is learning rapidly, and no people that has once put its foot upon the educational ladder can be stopped half-way. The moral is that the African will be knocking more and more insistently upon the door of skilled and technical employment in the future. His growing numbers, his increasing ability, his new-found ambition, combined with the pressure of economic forces, would seem to endanger the white man's position, even in the skilled employments.

It is not surprising therefore that the white man is ill at ease and apprehensive of the future. By the Colour Bar Act of 1926 he tried to entrench his position. He is clearly on the defensive. "May be we are afraid," said General Hertzog two years ago, "and it may be that our policy is dictated by fear; be it so, but our fear is wisdom, for what we fear is a bad future."

The African is challenging the European's claim that South Africa is a white man's country. He is becoming race conscious; he is organizing Trade Unions for natives; he is talking of "Africa for the Africans." The future of South Africa, it would seem, still lies in the lap of the gods.

A. M. CHIRGWIN.

LIFE AND POLITICS

IN the clubs, where the gossips eke out a precarious living by taking in each other's rumours, there is talk about a general election this year. How this rumour originated, I do not know, and as the basis of a rumour is usually the last thing anyone bothers about, one need not inquire. Perhaps it was something Mr. Baldwin wrote to the Primrose League, or maybe it arose from the spectacle of Mr. Baldwin prophesying victory for himself in the incongruously bellicose finish to a meek speech. Mr. Baldwin would not work himself up into an attitude of defiance if it would not be needed until October, 1929—or so some clever people say. Dogmatism is unsafe in this matter, but if you look at it coolly there seems no sound reason why the Government should take the plunge in a hurry. The position would be different if Mr. Baldwin had a good "selling line," but that he notoriously does not possess. The goods in his window are not a little fly-blown, and he must be hoping for some turn of the political market which would enable him to lay in a fresh stock. He is hardly likely to hit on anything so useful as the "Red Letter," but Mr. Baldwin is famous for optimism. Obviously the longer he waits the more is the chance of something turning up to capture the wavering vote for the Tories. Mr. Baldwin is a sensible man and realizes, one would suppose, that his best chance is to play the waiting game, and to allow the longest possible time for choice of an effectively irrelevant issue.

* * *

Like most prudent spectators in these matters, I hasten to hedge by putting the other side. One hears plenty of ingenious reasons why Mr. Baldwin should go to the country soon. The Northampton election was distinctly encouraging to the Conservatives; but for Mr. Hailwood it would have been a Conservative win, and that in a town with a Radical past. If the results of the three pending by-elections are favourable to the Government, it is quite possible on this line of argument that Mr. Baldwin should make up his mind to go to the country as a means of ridding himself of some obvious difficulties with his own party—it might, for instance, get over the domestic trouble about equal franchise for men and women. Another point is the fairly well known dislike of Labour to the idea of an election this year—financially and in other ways they are not ready for it. Those who argue in this way are waiting to see what happens at Faversham, Lancaster, and West Bristol. The Liberal organization is in a state of readiness. Leaders and rank and file are determined and well equipped with the means to enable Liberalism to fight its battle everywhere and at any time.

* * *

The pleasure of the Labour Party in the Northampton result is not greater than that of the irrepressible Mr. Hailwood. He has at last achieved his ambition of spoiling the chances of his party's candidate. It may be assumed that Mr. Hailwood's one thousand odd supporters are Die-hard Tories devoted to the queerly combined policies of all-round Protection and no votes for "flappers." If there had been no Mr. Hailwood in the field presumably these votes would have gone to Captain Renton and just carried him in. Mr. Hailwood has now succeeded in forcing himself upon the serious notice of Mr. Baldwin. A cynical remark one hears is that it would have paid Mr. Baldwin to "safeguard" illuminating glass before, or that he should do it now. The pending by-elections provide an attractive field on which Mr. Hailwood may continue his business campaign. The result, of course, is most disappointing to Liberals. Mr. Cope Morgan was generally expected to

reach the second place at least. I have no simple explanation to offer, but one may speculate whether a form of Liberalism which places a heavy emphasis on indiscriminate public economy is very attractive to progressive Liberal thought. It is possible, too, that the attack upon Colonel Malone on the ground of his former Bolshevism was carried too far, and resulted by reaction in rallying formidable Labour forces to his side. The experience of the Labour Party in the last general election was that on the whole the extremer candidates usually "did" the best.

* * *

It is well that some attention has been called to the unexampled boldness of the Northampton bookmaker who has been publishing the odds on the election openly in a local newspaper as the contest proceeded. Betting on election results is common enough; no one would make the hopeless attempt to stop it. People will bet on anything, and if there were no Parliamentary candidates "in the field," there would always be the Jumping Frog of Calaveras County or its equivalent. There is a serious side to it all the same. Some people think that the danger is not imaginary of the influencing of the result of an election by what may be called mass voting. The bookmaker publishes his odds. What is there to prevent the possibility of several hundreds or even thousands of people, perhaps employed in the same factory, agreeing together to bet and afterwards to vote in a certain way, and if so is that politics or is it gambling? In a closely contested election it is not fanciful to suppose that mass betting might prove to be an influence as degrading to politics as greyhound racing has proved to be to sport.

* * *

I hope to be able all in good time to hail Sir Herbert Samuel as the Carnot of Liberal victory. He has now added to his heavy burden at headquarters that of a Parliamentary candidate in Lancashire. This additional work would be impossible for ordinary men, but Sir Herbert Samuel, as we all know, is not an ordinary man. He seems to be gifted with a power of ordered efficiency which one might call machine-like if its possessor was not one who is as rich in ideals and knowledge as in administrative skill. Of course, his administrative ability is extraordinary. The Liberal Party organization badly wanted pulling together before he came on the scene, and that is what is happening to it. He is no mean performer on the platform; in the office he is as twenty men. Vague-minded people sometimes express irritation with Sir Herbert Samuel's impeccable performances as an official, much as the Athenians were annoyed with the extreme respectability of Aristides. This is human perhaps, but no Liberal ought to forget for a moment the debt we owe already to this man of steady Liberalism and first-rate executive ability—a trustworthy man.

* * *

In the middle of the night last week the Thames suddenly slopped over the Embankment, and within a few minutes about a score of basement dwellers had been drowned. The huge tidal wave was in the legal phrase "an act of God," but the circumstance that there were families living and sleeping in cellars to be drowned was the act of man. This tragic event threw a pitiless light upon the housing conditions of the Westminster poor. It revealed the discreditable fact that within half a mile of the Houses of Parliament there are mean streets which are among the worst slums in London, where whole families live below the level of the pavement, in dark and noisome rooms in which people were never intended to live at all,

and where no humane person would house a dog. After the flood had retreated I explored some of the dismal streets behind the Tate Gallery where so many lives were lost. There may be, probably there are, more repulsive slums in the East of London, but it is a shock to the public conscience to find, in the centre of official and polite London, where each house was intended to hold one family, each floor houses a family in the disgraceful, overcrowded conditions of to-day. I hope the Westminster Housing Association in its courageous fight against slumdom will make effective use of the dolorous advertisement the flood has provided of the need of drastic clearance and rebuilding.

* * *

The little matter of the threatened shops on Stanmore Common and the proceedings of the Hendon local authority have shown the value of instructed publicity. Local bodies may and often do flout sections of opinion in the neighbourhood, but they are mortally afraid of public agitation in the general Press. The Stanmore case has also served to bring to light an unsuspected weakness in the Town Planning law. A local authority may apparently alter a town-planning scheme in the interim stage—in this case by putting shops where shops were violently objected to—and may "get away with it," in spite of all the local objectors can do, or of anything the Health Ministry is likely to do to protect the latter. In the Stanmore case the Ministry refused to interfere with the doings of the Council, and but for the skilful opposition carried on in the papers by architects and lovers of beauty generally, Stanmore Common, an admirable bit of rural England, would have been ruined. The point is of importance, for if local authorities are allowed to alter their schemes without proper publicity and opportunity for hearing the opposition, we may well find open spaces ruined without anyone knowing anything about it until the damage is done. Unenlightened local Councils whose chief interest in development is in pushing up the rateable value of land may easily become a worse menace than any private speculator.

* * *

Judging by the criticisms of one's friends, lay opinion does not seem to be over friendly to the winning design for the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford. (The newspapers were so overwhelmed by the "news interest" of the winner being a young woman that the design was not much discussed. The tone of the Press reminded me of Dr. Johnson who, when asked, I think, to admire a woman preacher, said something to the effect that as in the case of dancing dogs the wonder was not that they did it well but that they did it at all.) I am aware that the right of the unqualified person to an opinion of the design will be violently contested. That will not intimidate one ordinary person from having the courage to say two things of the design as shown in the photographed model, one that it is not beautiful, and, second, that it seems to be out of harmony with its surroundings at Stratford. The point is simply that one would like to see a theatre which is more in harmony with the Tudor architecture of the town. I will add a notion of my own for what it is worth. Why cannot we have at Stratford the most appropriate memorial to Shakespeare—a theatre built (with the necessary modifications) after the pattern of the theatres of his time, the theatres for which he wrote. I have never ceased to desiderate an Elizabethan playhouse for Elizabethan plays, and Stratford is surely the best place for it. I will concede by the way that Miss Scott's theatre is more pleasing than the bastard Gothic of its predecessor, but I hope we shall never be driven to desire another fire.

KAPPA.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE MENTALITY OF THE MASTER COTTON SPINNERS

SIR,—Your article in last week's issue on the state of the cotton industry is most illuminating of some aspects of it, but to my mind shows a singular lack of knowledge of the psychology of the master cotton spinners generally. The mentality of the average member of the Spinners' Federation is the root cause of the plight of the industry.

You state that "the Spinners' Federation, apart from its new disposition to emulate the coal-owners, has an old-established reputation of its own as an exceedingly stubborn body." This, I think, is correct, but to suggest as you do further on in your article that the trade is concerned with making a gesture ("A pretty gesture indeed!") is, to my mind, indicative of a failure on your part to understand the spirit of the owners who are supposed to be so desirous of making that gesture.

There is no reputation among the master cotton spinners so coveted as that of being "smart." It is "smart" (to them) to refer to such a gesture after suggesting a decrease in wages and an increase in hours. Such sentimentality (they think) distracts attention from big issues. It is *very* "smart" (to them) to talk of a reduction of 12½ per cent. in present wage-rates and an increase in the working week to 52½ hours in the same breath. Of course, the suggestion of a longer week can be used for bargaining or, as a last resort, left out altogether as a final compromise. It is the reduction in wages the Spinners' Federation is concerned with.

Why are these men attacking wages? They know that the "stubborn" elements among the operatives will seize upon such an attack as a just reason for a strike in the cotton industry. A strike will do three things:—

1. Reduce wages;
2. Force those mills which refused to join the projected Yarn Association because they were doing too well, to be idle;
3. Create a temporary market by creating a scarcity.

That, I am convinced, is the reasoning of the master cotton spinners. To have a temporary prosperity; a rise in shares; to hold up further capital calls, and then to clear out as so many of their predecessors did in 1919 and 1920. They have been bitten in the last boom by "holding on" past the crest. Their real plan now is to create another boom; leave the younger men who are going to be bitten, if all goes according to plan, to sink with the industry when the boom is over; and retire to St. Anne's or Colwyn Bay and live happily ever afterwards.

The cotton industry is in the state it is in to-day because of this individualism run mad. Never, as anyone with an intimate knowledge of the cotton industry will tell you, has the opponent of private enterprise in industry had a better weapon than Lancashire's condition to-day.—Yours, &c.,

DAVID RENNIE HARDMAN

(Prospective Labour Candidate for the Borough of Cambridge).

4, Prospect Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Lancashire.
January 9th, 1928.

THE WAR GUILT QUESTION

SIR,—“An Outsider” does not seem to have grasped the point of my reference to French expansionist policy before the War. The point was that his view of the pre-war attitude and sentiments of Germany could not be reconciled with the fact that Germany, a country with a large surplus population and therefore needing colonies, tolerated for thirty years the acquisition by France of most of the territory available for colonization left on the globe, although France was incapable of colonizing the territories that she acquired, if only because she had no surplus population to send to them, and her dog-in-the-manger policy in her colonies closed them to a great extent to the commerce of other nations. Germany seems to me to have shown great forbearance in this matter—more, as I pointed out, than Great Britain or Italy. Three times—in 1905, 1907, and 1911

—it depended only on Germany whether there should be war with France, and Germany chose peace, although on each occasion she was sure of an easy victory. Throughout the Moroccan dispute, as the French Yellow Books show, Germany wanted only a deal. She was ready to agree even to a French protectorate over Morocco provided that she had compensation elsewhere, and when, in 1911, M. Cailiaux succeeded in making with Germany an agreement extraordinarily favourable to France, he was driven from power as a traitor because he had ceded to Germany a small piece of the French Congo with 140 French inhabitants in exchange for Morocco. On which side was the more aggressive and uncompromising temper?

I will again appeal to the testimony of Anatole France, who said in the interview published in the MANCHESTER GUARDIAN in June, 1913, from which I have already quoted:—

“It is certain that Germany has no desire for war and no intention of attacking France; her action after the Casablanca and Agadir affairs proved that, for, if she wanted war, either of those incidents gave her the opportunity of forcing France to declare it, and she did not take that opportunity. But, if the French Government continues its provocative policy, if the Nationalist reactionaries obtain so complete a control of the political machine as to make Germany think that war is inevitable, there may be another Agadir incident with a less happy ending.”

“An Outsider” fails, I think, to give sufficient importance to economic factors. The absorption by France of vast territories that she was unable properly to develop and that she tried to close to the commerce of other countries was a serious matter for the rest of the world, and is still more so now that France has not even a large enough population to ensure her own production and is obliged to import foreign labour.

It amazes me to learn that there is a “fire for revenge smouldering in the breast” of the rising generation in Germany. I lived in Germany from 1922 to 1925 and found remarkably little desire for revenge. The Germans are the least vindictive people that I have come across. When I visited Germany for the first time after the war in 1921, I was shamed by the enthusiasm for the English, merely because we behaved more decently than the French and the Belgians in the occupied territory. The appalling sufferings caused by the Blockade were forgotten. What anti-French feeling there is in Germany—and there is much less than there would be in any other country in the same circumstances—is entirely due to French conduct since the War, especially in the occupied territory.

What is the German policy that “excuses” the policy of M. Poincaré? Is it the policy of Locarno—the solemn renunciation by Germany of Alsace-Lorraine, unparalleled in history? Is it the patience with which Germany has waited for two years for the Locarno policy to be continued and carried to its logical conclusion? In what respect, in the opinion of “An Outsider,” could Dr. Stresemann's policy have been more consistently conducive to the peace of Europe than it has been? The obstacle to a Franco-German understanding is in France, not in Germany, and it is in France that “a change of outlook” is “essential to our future.” In my opinion an international inquiry into the causes of the War would facilitate that change, but I fear that no international committee would be given access to the French archives. The French Government, having at last recognized that it cannot with decency refrain any longer from any publication of the diplomatic documents concerning the origins of the War, has appointed a commission of forty-eight persons to superintend their publication. Three of the four secretaries of the commission are Government officials, and the Commission includes thirteen other permanent officials of the Quai d'Orsay and diplomats, most of whom were intimately concerned with the events leading to the War. Such a commission is a guarantee of bad faith. The French Government will never publish all the documents, for their publication would show that many of the documents in the French Yellow Book of 1914 were faked or even forged. That has already been proved by M. Georges Demartial in his little book, “L'Evangile du Quai d'Orsay,” to which no reply has been or can be made.

May I take this opportunity of correcting two slips in my last letter? M. Poincaré became Prime Minister, not President of the Republic, in January, 1912. He was elected

President a year later. The incident at the Salon concerning the bust of the German Emperor occurred in April, 1914, not in 1913.—Yours, &c.,

January 9th, 1928.

ROBERT DELL.

STREET ACCIDENTS

SIR,—There is one way and only one way in which the number of these accidents can be reduced. In order to explain the method I will describe three kinds of accidents:—

(1) A motor-car is driven close to the kerb along the street at a speed of, say, 15 miles an hour. A foot passenger inadvertently steps off the kerb just in front of the car and is instantly killed.

(2) A car is driven along a street 15 or 20 miles an hour. Some children rush at full speed out of a doorway and into the road just in front of the car, and one of them is killed.

(3) A lorry is standing in the road. A motor-car proceeding at 15 to 20 miles is passing it. A foot passenger wishing to cross the road concealed by the lorry steps in front of the car and is instantly killed.

In each of those three cases the car has been driven at what might be called a moderate pace. There has been contributory negligence by the foot passenger. The ordinary coroner will say "Accidental death, no blame to the motor driver," and the ordinary magistrate and the ordinary jury will say the same thing. No new rules will reduce the number of such accidents. A speed of 10 miles an hour might be fatal in each of the above three cases. No rules can be devised that will suit the thousands of circumstances of the streets. The only way of stopping the accident is to make the person whose vehicle does the injury responsible, and to give up the theory of contributory negligence.

If that were done no person would drive a car close to the kerb, overtaking a foot passenger who might inadvertently step on to the road, at a speed faster than 5 miles an hour. If he wishes to go at a faster speed he will get at least 6 feet from the kerb, so that he can both warn and avoid the foot passenger. The chauffeur will anticipate that from every open doorway children will rush helter-skelter into the street. He will also anticipate that behind every lorry or omnibus there is a foot passenger trying to cross the road, and in a similar way he will avoid accidents that might arise in a different manner.

There are some men who do now drive in the way that I have suggested, but there are many others who require to have their responsibility brought home to them by the coroners, magistrates, and judges, very seriously. Since these three persons have decided otherwise, it is necessary to have an Act of Parliament to the effect that the person who driving a car inflicts serious injury upon a foot passenger shall be held criminally responsible. This would not necessarily reduce the average speed of traffic, but it would stop the slaughter.—Yours, &c.,

ARNOLD LUPTON.

7, Victoria Street, S.W.1.
January 9th, 1928.

HANDWRITING

SIR,—The letter by Retired Sub-Editor in your issue of December 24th last must have set the minds of many readers, and writers, thinking.

Surely a sub-editor of any standing should be above the suspicion of leg-pulling; but when one of them tells us that a man's handwriting led him to believe it was the sign of old age and mental deterioration, we are forced to say—joke!

The late H. W. Massingham's handwriting, even as a young man, was—well, to say the best about it, nothing more than a wave line. Possibly Retired Sub-Editor may have seen some of it, also he may have seen the MSS. of several of the present-day younger generation of book reviewers, and one or two of the dramatic critics who come under the same category. Should he have had that misfortune, I expect he will reply, "Oh! well, senile decay approaches some people much earlier than others." Writers please note.—Yours, &c.,

PRINTER (not retired).

"BOOKS FOR BOYS"

SIR,—I crave your permission to address to you a few observations regarding your very interesting remarks in the column "Books for Boys" (THE NATION, December 10th, 1927); and in preface I beg you to take note and believe that these observations are not offered in any grousing or disgruntled spirit, but in entire good will.

It is much the fashion among those who were brought up upon Henty, Manville Fenn, Ballantyne, and that glorious school of writers for boys (who made the "B.O.P." in its youth so magnificent) to proclaim in print that their modern successors fall far behind them. Whereas the fact is that a careful and critical comparison between the works of those writers and the works of many of the modern writers of "juveniles" does show that the moderns have most worthily upheld and in some cases improved upon the standard set by the "old masters." But such careful and critical comparison must be made and should, I venture to think, be carefully and conscientiously made before we pass judgment. If we have not compared we cannot pass judgment.

I should like very much to direct your attention, accordingly, to the work in that field of Mr. Herbert Strang, Mr. Percy Westerman, Mr. Frederick Watson, and others whom I should be happy to name to you.

Of the six books which you hold up to instance (at the beginning of your article) as inimitably above anything written for boys to-day, I will, if I may, point out that two only were expressly written for or designed for boys or juveniles, viz., "Coral Island" and "The Fifth Form of St. Dominic's." The other four—"Tom Cringle's Log," "Mr. Midshipman Easy," "British Fishes," and "The Boy's Country Book," were not "juveniles" in the accepted sense; but if I give you in "The Boy's Country Book" (because of its title) I more than balance the account by pointing out that the joke in "Midshipman Easy" about the baby being a very little one would scarcely creep within the pages of a "juvenile."

That standard of unselfishness, thoroughness, thoughtfulness, and good humour, which you deplore as departed, still prevails, and still characterizes books for the young by our leading modern writers.

This brings us to the very truth of the matter. Which is this. That the books which we read when we are young make the deepest impression upon us; our minds are plastic to receive and retain. We who loved our Henty and Ballantyne, &c., cannot accordingly conceive that any can write like them nowadays, or can thrill the child to-day as they thrilled our childhood. But if you sat down now to read some Henty and Ballantyne (&c.), you would feel some measure of surprise that they no longer thrilled you. Why? Not because they are not fine books, but because they are fare for immature and forming minds.

A book read for the purpose of review by a mature and formed mind will, if it is expressly written for the young, be naturally "found wanting" by comparison with a book read by the same mind when immature and forming for the purpose of recreation. But if you could bring the same mind to both books you would be enabled to form the precise comparison.

As this subject is of such mutual interest (I happen myself to be a writer of "juveniles"), you will forgive me, I feel sure, if I add a few other most pertinent comments.

The new is good; tested by new canons: yet constantly we find old prejudices thrown at it to its hurt. Those who propagate this delusion that the new falls far behind the old, are apt to forget that when Henty, Ballantyne, and the other great masters were writing they had not to compete with such competition as modern writers of juveniles must struggle against. There was no flood of magazines on the bookstalls to distract the boy's reading. He must read Henty, Ballantyne, &c., or no one (unless it be the "Jack Harkaway" dreadfuls). Those who disparage the new are also apt to overlook the little fact (which must obtrude itself in a material world) that whereas Henty, Ballantyne, and the rest have now no taxes to pay towards their country's support, modern writers for the young, who have to pay such taxes, have double reason to find discouragement and depression every time they find in journals of note a critic

of note informing them—and informing the public—that they are pigmies, inviting the public to buy such works rather than theirs; when, since the copyright has, I believe, expired in most of these past writers, we have not even the consolation of knowing that some return in the form of royalties is passing into the pockets of the old masters' next of kin.

But that is immaterial from the critical point of view; and I must assent if you retort that it is a consideration which has no weight in a discussion of literary values. It is in these lists of literary value and entertainment that I am venturing to break a lance with you, maintaining that in atmosphere, style, pabulum, the sense of humane letters, and general standard of value, with fineness of the story told, the moderns have nothing to learn from the past; as our decriers can satisfy themselves if they will read us.

I have expressed myself baldly. For that accept my apologies. And please believe that I am writing in no hostile or captious spirit; I write from the heart, and that must be my further apology for anything in this letter which may appear harsh. Also I do write from knowledge, having made it my business of recent years to compare critically the books of the ancients, which I loved in my own boyhood, and the memory of which I treasure, with those of the moderns. When it comes to literary style the ancients are a long way out of it. And regarding the miscellanies of Routledge and Beeton (which you instance again), I would only suggest that the modern boy would dismiss them as "thoroughly stodgy." Please compare these miscellanies with such an Annual, say, as "Strang's Annual"—I am not in the employment of its publishers, the Oxford University Press—and say again which shows the higher literary value, style, sense of form, fine matter.

—Yours, &c.,

GUNBY HADATH.

39, Chichele Road, N.W.2.

FOUR ENGLISH HISTORIANS

II.—GIBBON*

By LYTTON STRACHEY.

HAPPINESS is the word that immediately rises to the mind at the thought of Edward Gibbon: and happiness in its widest connotation—including good fortune as well as enjoyment. Good fortune, indeed, followed him from the cradle to the grave in the most tactful way possible; occasionally it appeared to fail him; but its absence always turned out to be a blessing in disguise. Out of a family of seven he alone had the luck to survive—but only with difficulty; and the maladies of his childhood opened his mind to the pleasures of study and literature. His mother died; but her place was taken by a devoted aunt, whose care brought him through the dangerous years of adolescence to a vigorous manhood. His misadventures at Oxford saved him from becoming a don. His exile to Lausanne, by giving him a command of the French language, initiated him into European culture, and at the same time enabled him to lay the foundations of his scholarship. His father married again; but his stepmother remained childless and became one of his dearest friends. He fell in love; the match was forbidden; and he escaped the dubious joys of domestic life with the future Madame Necker. While he was allowed to travel on the Continent, it seemed doubtful for some time whether his father would have the resources, or the generosity, to send him over the Alps into Italy. His fate hung in the balance; but at last his father produced the necessary five hundred pounds, and, in the autumn of 1764, Rome saw her historian. His father died at exactly the right moment, and left him exactly the right amount of money. At the age of thirty-three, Gibbon found himself his own master, with a fortune just sufficient to support him as an English gentleman of leisure and fashion. For ten years he lived

in London, a Member of Parliament, a placeman, and a diner-out, and during those ten years he produced the first three volumes of his History. After that, he lost his place, failed to obtain another, and, finding his income unequal to his expenses, returned to Lausanne, where he took up his residence in the house of a friend, overlooking the Lake of Geneva. It was the final step in his career, and no less fortunate than all the others. In Lausanne, he was rich once more, he was famous, he enjoyed a delightful combination of retirement and society. Before another ten years were out he had completed his History; and, in ease, dignity, and absolute satisfaction, his work in this world was accomplished.

One sees in such a life an epitome of the blessings of the eighteenth century—the wonderful *μηδὲν ἄγαν* of that most balmy time—the rich fruit ripening slowly on the sun-warmed wall, and coming inevitably to its delicious perfection. It is difficult to imagine, at any other period in history, such a combination of varied qualities, so beautifully balanced—the profound scholar who was also a brilliant man of the world—the votary of cosmopolitan culture, who never for a moment ceased to be a supremely English "character." The ten years of Gibbon's life in London afford an astonishing spectacle of interacting energies. By what strange power did he succeed in producing a masterpiece of enormous erudition and perfect form, while he was leading the gay life of a man about town, spending his evenings at White's or Boodle's or the Club, attending Parliament, oscillating between his house in Bentinck Street, his country cottage at Hampton Court, and his little establishment at Brighton, spending his summers in Bath or Paris, and even, at odd moments, doing a little work at the Board of Trade, to show that his place was not entirely a sinecure? Such a triumph could only have been achieved by the sweet reasonableness of the eighteenth century. "Monsieur Gibbon n'est point mon homme," said Rousseau. Decidedly! The prophet of the coming age of sentiment and romance could have nothing in common with such a nature. It was not that the historian was a mere frigid observer of the golden mean: far from it. He was full of fire and feeling. His youth had been at moments riotous—night after night he had reeled hallooing down St. James's Street. Old age did not diminish the natural warmth of his affections; the beautiful letter—a model of its kind—written on the death of his aunt, in his fiftieth year, is a proof of it. But the fire and the feeling were controlled and co-ordinated. Boswell was a Rousseau-ite, one of the first of the Romantics, an inveterate sentimentalist, and nothing could be more complete than the contrast between his career and Gibbon's. He, too, achieved a glorious triumph; but it was by dint of the sheer force of native genius asserting itself over the extravagance and disorder of an agitated life—a life which, after a desperate struggle, seemed to end at last in darkness and shipwreck. With Gibbon there was never any struggle: everything came naturally to him—learning and dissipation, industry and indolence, affection and scepticism—in the correct proportions; and he enjoyed himself up to the very end.

To complete the picture, one must notice another antithesis: the wit, the genius, the massive intellect, were housed in a physical mould that was ridiculous. A little figure, extraordinarily rotund, met the eye, surmounted by a top-heavy head, with a button nose, planted amid a vast expanse of cheek and ear, and chin upon chin rolling downward. Nor was this appearance only; the odd shape reflected something in the inner man. Mr. Gibbon, it was noticed, was always slightly over-dressed; his favourite wear was flowered velvet. He was a little vain, a little pompous; at the first moment, one almost laughed; then

* The first article of this series—on Hume—appeared in our last issue, and the next—on Macaulay—will appear next week.

one forgot everything under the fascination of that even flow of admirably intelligent, exquisitely turned, and most amusing sentences. Among all his other merits this obviously ludicrous egotism took its place. The astonishing creature was able to make a virtue even of absurdity. Without that touch of nature, he would have run the risk of being too much of a good thing; as it was, there was no such danger; he was preposterous, and a human being.

It is not difficult to envisage the character and the figure; what seems strange, and remote, and hard to grasp is the connection between this individual and the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. The paradox, indeed, is so complete as to be almost romantic. At a given moment—October 15th, 1764—at a given place—the Capitoline Hill, outside the church of Aracoeli—the impact occurred between the serried centuries of Rome and Edward Gibbon. His life, his work, his fame, his place in the history of civilization, followed from that circumstance. The point of his achievement lay precisely in the extreme improbability of it. The utter incongruity of those combining elements produced the masterpiece—the gigantic ruin of Europe through a thousand years, mirrored in the mind of an eighteenth-century English gentleman.

How was the miracle accomplished? Needless to say, Gibbon was a great artist—one of those rare spirits, with whom a vital and penetrating imagination and a supreme capacity for general conceptions express themselves instinctively in an appropriate form. That the question has ever been, not only asked, but seriously debated, whether History was an art, is certainly one of the curiosities of human ineptitude. What else can it possibly be? It is obvious that History is not a science: it is obvious that History is not the accumulation of facts, but the relation of them. Only the pedantry of incomplete academic persons could have vainly struggled towards any other conception. Facts relating to the past, when they are collected without art, are compilations; and compilations, no doubt, may be useful; but they are no more History than butter, eggs, salt, and herbs are an omelette. That Gibbon was a great artist, therefore, is implied in the statement that he was a great historian; but what is interesting is the particular nature of his artistry. His whole genius was pre-eminently classical; order, lucidity, balance, precision—the great classical qualities—dominate his work; and his History is chiefly remarkable as one of the supreme monuments of Classic Art in European literature.

"L'ordre est ce qu'il y a de plus rare dans les opérations de l'esprit." Gibbon's work is a magnificent illustration of the splendid dictum of Fénelon. He brought order out of the enormous chaos of his subject—a truly stupendous achievement! With characteristic good fortune, indeed, the material with which he had to cope was still just not too voluminous to be digested by a single extremely competent mind. In the following century, even a Gibbon would have collapsed under the accumulated mass of knowledge at his disposal. As it was, by dint of a superb constructive vision, a serene self-confidence, a very acute judgment, and an astonishing facility in the manipulation of material, he was able to dominate the known facts. To dominate, nothing more; anything else would have been foreign to his purpose. He was a classicist; and his object was not comprehension, but illumination. He drove a straight, firm road through the vast unexplored forest of Roman history; his readers could follow with easy pleasure along the wonderful way; they might glance, as far as their eyes could reach, into the entangled recesses on either side of them; but they were not invited to stop, or wander, or camp out, or make friends with the natives; they must be content to look, and to pass on.

It is clear that Gibbon's central problem was the one of exclusion: how much, and what, was he to leave out? This was largely a question of scale—always one of the major difficulties in literary composition—and it appears from several passages in the autobiographies that Gibbon paid particular attention to it. Incidentally, it may be observed that the six Autobiographies were not so much excursions in egotism—though no doubt it is true that Gibbon was not without a certain fondness for what he himself called "the most disgusting of the pronouns"—as exercises on the theme of scale. Every variety of compression and expansion is visible among those remarkable pages; but apparently, since the manuscripts were left in an unfinished state, Gibbon still felt, after the sixth attempt, that he had not discovered the right solution. Even with the scale of the History, he was not altogether satisfied; the chapters on Christianity, he thought, might, with further labour, have been considerably reduced. But, even more fundamental than the element of scale, there was something else that, in reality, conditioned the whole treatment of his material, the whole scope and nature of his History; and that was the style in which it was written. The style once fixed, everything else followed. Gibbon was well aware of this. He wrote his first chapter three times over, his second and third twice; then at last he was satisfied, and after that he wrote on without a hitch. In particular, the problem of exclusion was solved. Gibbon's style is probably the most exclusive in literature. By its very nature, it bars out a great multitude of human energies. It makes sympathy impossible, it takes no cognizance of passion, it turns its back upon religion with a withering smile. But that was just what was wanted. Classic beauty came instead. By the penetrating influence of style—automatically, inevitably—lucidity, balance, and precision were everywhere introduced; and the miracle of order was established over the chaos of a thousand years.

Of course, the Romantics raised a protest. "Gibbon's style," said Coleridge, "is detestable; but," he added, "it is not the worst thing about him." Critics of the later nineteenth century were less consistent. They admired Gibbon for everything except his style, imagining that his History would have been much improved if it had been written in some other way; they did not see that, if it had been written in any other way, it would have ceased to exist; just as St. Paul's would cease to exist if it was rebuilt in Gothic. Obsessed by the colour and movement of romantic prose, they were blind to the subtlety, the clarity, the continuous strength of Gibbon's writing. Gibbon could turn a bold phrase with the best of them—"the fat slumbers of the Church," for instance—if he wanted to; but he very rarely wanted to; such effects would have disturbed the easy, close-knit, homogeneous surface of his work. His use of words is in fact extremely delicate. When, describing St. Simeon Stylites on his pillar, he speaks of "this last and lofty station," he succeeds, with the least possible emphasis, merely by the combination of those two alliterative epithets with that particular substantive, in making the whole affair ridiculous. One can almost see his shoulders shrug. The nineteenth century found him pompous; they did not relish the irony beneath the pomp. He produces some of his most delightful effects by rhythm alone. In the "Vindication"—a work which deserves to be better known, for it shows us Gibbon, as one sees him nowhere else, really letting himself go—there is an admirable example of this. "I still think," he says, in reply to a criticism by Dr. Randolph, "I still think that an hundred Bishops, with Athanasius at their head, were as competent judges of the discipline of the fourth century, as even the Lady Margaret's Professor of Divinity in the Uni-

versity of Oxford." Gibbon's irony, no doubt, is the salt of his work; but, like all irony, it is the product of style. It was not for nothing that he read through every year the "Lettres Provinciales" of Pascal. From this point of view, it is interesting to compare him with Voltaire. The irony of the great Frenchman was a flashing sword—extreme, virulent, deadly—a terrific instrument of propaganda. Gibbon uses the weapon with far more delicacy; he carves his enemy "as a dish fit for the Gods"; his mocking is aloof, almost indifferent, and perhaps, in the long run, for that very reason, even more effective.

At every period of his life Gibbon is a pleasant thing to contemplate, but perhaps most pleasant of all in the closing weeks of it, during his last visit to England. He had hurried home from Lausanne to join his friend Lord Sheffield, whose wife had died suddenly, and who, he felt, was in need of his company. The journey was no small proof of his affectionate nature; old age was approaching; he was corpulent, gouty, and accustomed to every comfort; and the war of the French Revolution was raging in the districts through which he had to pass. But he did not hesitate, and after skirting the belligerent armies in his chaise, arrived safely in England. After visiting Lord Sheffield, he proceeded to Bath, to stay with his stepmother. The amazing little figure, now almost spherical, bowled along the Bath Road in the highest state of exhilaration. "I am always," he told his friend, "so much delighted, and improved, with this union of ease and motion, that, were not the expense enormous, I would travel every year some hundred miles, more especially in England." Mrs. Gibbon, a very old lady, but still full of vitality, worshipped her stepson, and the two spent ten days together, talking, almost always tête-à-tête, for ten hours a day. Then the historian went off to Althorpe, where he spent a happy morning with Lord Spencer, looking at early editions of Cicero. And so back to London. In London, a little trouble arose. A protuberance, in the lower part of his person, which, owing to years of characteristic *insouciance*, had grown to extraordinary proportions, required attention; an operation was necessary; but it went off well, and there seemed to be no danger. Once more Mr. Gibbon dined out. Once more he was seen, in his accustomed attitude, with advanced forefinger, addressing the company, and rapping his snuff-box at the close of each particularly pointed phrase. But illness came on again—nothing very serious. The great man lay in bed, discussing how much longer he would live—he was fifty-six—ten years, twelve years, or, perhaps, twenty. He ate some chicken, and drank three glasses of madeira. Life seemed almost as charming as usual. Next morning, getting out of bed for a necessary moment, "Je suis plus adroit," he said, with his odd smile, to his French valet. Back in bed again, he muttered something more, a little incoherently, lay back among the pillows, dozed, half-woke, dozed again, and became unconscious—for ever.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

MISS EDNA THOMAS, who is already well known in the music halls as a singer of negro spirituals, has been giving a series of matinées at the St. Martin's Theatre. Like Miss Ruth Draper, she provides the entire entertainment herself—she is aided by an unseen pianist, but sings many numbers unaccompanied—and she has also her compatriot's gift of complete control over her audience. In a music hall Miss Thomas's turn is as a breath of fresh air in contrast to her environment, and consequently one is inclined to acclaim her advent and leave the rest to her, taking for granted her artistry and her quality of voice. Now, however, she has no such background to emphasize her charm, and I for one was glad to find that that charm

is not merely comparative but inherent. There were, I thought, moments of "music-halliness" (epitomized by the fact that she is still billed as "The Lady from Louisiana"), when the means of expression overshadowed the expression itself, but they are few and incidental, and the songs are so poignant in their simple earnestness, Miss Thomas's feeling for them so obviously deep-rooted and sincere, that one overlooks them without effort and is entranced and often deeply moved.

"Bits and Pieces" (the new revue at the Prince's Theatre) is built up round the personality of George Robey, who is on the stage almost the whole time. It is therefore useless to discuss the performance. Those who admire the art of George Robey will like "Bits and Pieces"; those who do not, will not. I unfortunately belong to the latter category. His humour partakes of the quality known as Victorian cheerfulness, never a touch of subtlety, rarely a shade of cynicism. But instead, great solid wads of cheeriness, rows about coming home late at night, about ugly middle-aged brides, and a vague suspicion of mothers-in-law and curates. The whole æsthetic is based on that "cult of ugliness" which was such a feature of nineteenth-century art. Mr. Robey has great gifts, and has something of genius in him, in that he sums up perfectly a phase of civilization, but a civilization, I venture to think, in many ways inferior to our own. Think of Mr. Robey and then think of M. Chevalier. Whole biographical æons seem to have rolled between them. The most agreeable feature of the evening was, to my mind, some acrobatics by "The Three Royces."

The principal item in the programme of the Film Society's performance last Sunday was a Japanese film entitled "The Tragedy of Temple Hagi." It was interesting to see the static, formal methods of the Japanese theatre applied to the cinema, and the restrained, dignified acting made a very pleasant change from the gushing abandonment of the ordinary American film. The film is based on a fourteenth-century love-story which relates the infatuation of a painter for a dancing-girl and consequent neglect of his work, the intrigues of his rival in art, and the love of his daughter for his pupil; the pictures are taken with great taste and intelligence. Other films shown were "Picture-making in Egypt," made in 1912 and showing an American company taking film scenes in the desert near Luxor, "Flirting with Death," which contains some remarkable pictures of performances by skiing experts, including an ascent and descent of Monte Rosa, and a French film entitled "Fait-Divers." The latter is a sort of impressionist film showing the life of Paris and interwoven with it an "eternal triangle" story: it has some excellent and novel ideas and some remarkable photographs. There were also shown selected scenes from "I.N.R.I.," a German film of the life of Christ which was shown in London some years ago, but attracted, for some reason, little attention. It is in most respects much superior, especially in the presentation of the figure of Christ himself, to the American film on the same subject which is being shown here at the present moment.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:—

Saturday, January 14th.—

Marie Thomson and Charles Hambourg, Song and 'Cello Recital, Victoria and Albert Museum, 8.

Sunday, January 15th.—Mr. S. K. Ratcliffe on "England as Defoe Saw it (1724)," South Place, 11.

Mr. H. F. Bing on "The Federation of Youth and the World Peace Congress, 1928," Indian Students' Union, 5.

"Sexes and Sevens," by Mr. Arthur Wimperis, at the Globe.

"Discontented Peter," at the Arts Theatre.

Monday, January 16th.—

University College Dramatic Society in Laurence Housman's "Little Plays of St. Francis," University College, 8.15 (January 16th-21st).

Film—"The Immortals of Bonnie Scotland," at the Polytechnic.

Strindberg's "The Dance of Death," at the Apollo.

"Henry the Fifth," at the Lyric, Hammersmith.

"Man and Superman," at the Little.

Tuesday, January 17th.—

Gerald Cooper, Chamber Concert, Æolian Hall, 8.30.

"Regatta," by Mr. Sutton Vane, at the Prince of Wales.

Wednesday, January 18th.—

The Hewitt String Quartet, Recital, Æolian Hall, 8.30.

Thursday, January 19th.—

John Goss, Song Recital, Wigmore Hall, 8.30.

Mr. E. H. Ellis on "Photography with a Microscope," Central Library, Fulham, 8.

Mr. Harold Monro reading poems by Rupert Brooke, Poetry Bookshop, 6.

Friday, January 20th.—

The Budapest Trio, Chamber Concert, Wigmore Hall, 8.15.

OMICRON.

THEATRES.—continued from opposite column.

"LANCELOT OF DENMARK." Translated from the Old Dutch by PROFESSOR GEYL; and

"THE POET LAUREATE." A Fantasy by GEOFFREY DEARMER. December 16th—22nd, and for a further run from January 3rd.

NIGHTLY AT 8.30.
SUNDAY EVENING
PERFORMANCES.
NO MONDAY
PERFORMANCES.

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PRINCE OF WALES.

Gerrard 7482.

TUESDAY NEXT, at 8. (Subsequently at 8.30.)

"REGATTA." By SUTTON VANE.

MATINEES, THURSDAYS AND SATURDAYS, at 2.30.

PRINCES.

GEORGE ROBEY in "BITS AND PIECES."

MARIE BLANCHE.

EVENINGS, at 8.30. MATINEES, WED. & SAT., at 2.30

ROYALTY. (Ger. 2690.) NIGHTLY, 8.40. Mats., Tues., Thurs., Sat., 2.30.

"THE CROOKED BILLET." By DION TITHERADGE.

Leon Quartermaine, Mercla Swinburne, Barbara Gott, C. V. France.

SHAFTESBURY. (Gerr. 6666.)

NIGHTLY, at 8.30.

MATINEES, WEDNESDAY & SATURDAY, at 2.30.

"THE HIGH ROAD." By FREDERICK LONSDALE.

ST. MARTIN'S. Gerr. 3416. Evgs., 8.30 sharp. Mats., Tues. & Fri., 2.30.

"THE SILVER CORD." By SIDNEY HOWARD.

LILLIAN BRAITHWAITE.

CLAIRE EAMES.

WYNDHAM'S (Regent 3028.)

NIGHTLY, at 8.30.

MATINEES, WEDNESDAY & SATURDAY, at 2.30.

EDITH EVANS in

"THE WAY OF THE WORLD."

CINEMAS.

CAPITOL, Haymarket. CONTINUOUS, 1 to 11. SUNDAYS, 6 to 11.

Commencing Sunday, January 15th.

LILLIAN GLISH and NORMAN KERRY in

"ANNIE LAURIE."

RIALTO, Piccadilly Circus. DAILY, 12.30 to 11. SUNDAYS, 6 to 11.

IVAN MOSJOUKINE in

"PRINCE OF ADVENTURERS."

A Story of the World's Most Passionate Lover.

STOLL PICTURE THEATRE, Kingsway. (Holborn 3703.)

DAILY, 2 to 10.45. (SUNDAYS, 6 to 10.30.)

Jan. 16th, 17th & 18th. RONALD COLMAN & VILMA BANKY in "THE NIGHT OF LOVE"; Warner Oland in "WHAT HAPPENED TO FATHER."

Jan. 19th, 20th & 21st. JACK HOLT in Zane Grey's "THE MYSTERIOUS RIDER"; Edna Murphy in "THINGS WIVES TELL." Also ETHEL HOOK, Contralto.

THEATRES.

ALDWYCH.

(Gerrard 2304-5.)

Nightly at 8.15. Matinees, Wed. and Fri., at 2.30.

"THARK."

Mary Brough, A. Bromley Davenport, and RALPH LYNN.

AMBASSADORS.

(Ger. 4460.) EVENINGS, 8.30. Tues. & Fri., 2.30.

"MARCH HARES."

ATHENE SEYLER, LESLIE BANKS, and HILDA TREVELYAN.

COURT THEATRE.

(Sloane 5137.)

EVENINGS, at 8.30.

BARRY JACKSON'S SEASON.

"THE ADDING MACHINE." By Elmer Rice.

MATINEES, THURSDAY & SATURDAY, at 2.30.

COVENT GARDEN OPERA HOUSE.

Gerr. 7961.

"THE KING OF KINGS."

DAILY, at 2.30 and 8.30.

(Sunday, at 8.)

Prices (inc. Tax): 8/6, 5/9, 3/6, 2/4, 1/2.

CRITERION.

(Ger. 3844)

8.30.

MATS., TUES. & SAT., 2.30.

"QUEST." A Comedy of Adventure by Ralph Stock.

HEATHER THATCHER.

HUGH WAKEFIELD.

DRURY LANE.

EVGS., 8.15.

MATS., WED. and SAT., at 2.30.

"THE DESERT SONG."

HARRY WELCHMAN. EDITH DAY. GENE GERRARD.

FORTUNE THEATRE. Regent 1307.

NIGHTLY, at 8.30.

Matinees, Thursday and Saturday, at 2.30

"ON APPROVAL." By FREDERICK LONSDALE.

ELLIS JEFFREYS.

RONALD SQUIRE.

GARRICK.

Gerrard 9513.

THE VAMPIRE PLAY, "DRACULA." EVGS. ONLY, 8.30.

MATS., DAILY, 2.30, "ROBINSON CRUSOE." Last Performance, To-day.

HIPPODROME, London.

Gerrard 0650.

EVENINGS, 8.15.

MATS., WEDS., THURS. & SATS., at 2.30.

"HIT THE DECK."

IVY TRESMAND.
SYDNEY HOWARD.

ALICE MORLEY.
STANLEY HOLLICWAY.

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KINGSWAY.

(Gerr. 4032.) Nightly, 8.15. Mats., Wed., Thurs. & Sat., 2.30.

JEAN CADELL in

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LITTLE. (Reg. 2401.)

NIGHTLY, at 8.

MATINEE, SAT., 2.30.

SHAW'S "YOU NEVER CAN TELL."

Next Production, MONDAY, at 8. WED., SAT., 2.30

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THE WORLD OF BOOKS

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THE vast output of little books on large subjects is the direct result of the demand for knowledge by the ignorant multitude, and is one of the most notable results of universal education. These books are often valuable not only because they impart knowledge, but because they, in effect, give a summarized sample of contemporary thought on some subject. For instance, the man who reads Professor Hearnshaw's "The Development of Political Ideas" in Benn's Sixpenny Library and Mr. Hamilton Fyfe's "Archon, or the Future of Government" in the To-day and To-morrow Series (Kegan Paul, 2s. 6d.) may learn a good deal about the contemporary attitude towards politics and government.

* * *

Our age is one of sceptical disillusionment, but nowhere is its scepticism wider and deeper than in its attitude towards the science and art of politics. Professor Hearnshaw and Mr. Fyfe are men of their age; they mistrust political theories and still more politicians and Governments, and they write about political ideals with kindly, but contemptuous, patronage. Politicians and Governments have, of course, always been public whipping-boys, and the most convenient objects for witty writers to sharpen epigrams on. Mr. Fyfe quotes liberally, and his quotations are all unfavourable. "Gouverner, c'est mentir," said Henri Rochefort. "No political reform is worth the shedding of a single drop of blood," said O'Connell, who ought to have known. "More crimes and blunders have been committed within its walls," said John Bright of No. 10, Downing Street, "than in any other place in Great Britain." "I always hold that politicians," said Gladstone, who ought to have known, "are the men whom, as a rule, it is most difficult to comprehend. For my own part, I have never understood, or thought I understood, above one or two." It would be possible to fill pages with such quotations, but the political pessimism of the past, it should be observed, was only skin-deep. The epigrammatists let off their epigrams and the man in the street grumbled at "the Government," but nearly everyone at all times believed that if only the right form of government could be established, the millennium would flower in his back garden on the following morning. In the eighteenth century even Voltaire and the Encyclopædists were convinced that an "enlightened" monarch could, by a few reforms, banish ignorance and misery and all political folly from the world, and in the nineteenth century millions of people believed that democracy was a short cut back to Paradise.

* * *

Nothing is more eloquent of the amazing optimism of human beings than the fact that in all ages they have combined disgusted contempt and mistrust of their Government with passionate belief in the Messianic nature of government. To-day this optimism appears to be wearing a little thin, and most people are as sceptical about the efficacy of government as they are about the efficacy of prayer. Only a few Communists, at one end of the scale, and a few Fascists, at the other, still maintain that there is a true political faith and that political salvation can be found in a Red Flag or a Black Shirt. The majority adopt the non-committal attitude of Professor Hearnshaw who, looking into the political future, prophesies nothing, but mildly hopes for "one step forward along the path whose ultimate goal is the final solution of the æonian problem of political science"; or they would agree with Mr. Fyfe that there is no magic in any form of government and that the best hope for the future lies in limiting the sphere, diminishing the importance, and reducing the humbug of Governments.

A detailed study of the causes of the present-day political disillusionment would be very valuable. It is, of course, part of a general disillusionment which can be seen operating on religion, literature, music, and art. It is partly due to the high hopes and disappointing results of nineteenth-century democracy, partly to the reaction which has followed the war. Mr. Fyfe gives an interesting analysis of some of the particular causes which have been operative in England. He holds that the enormous power usurped by the Party Machine has sapped democracy of its virtue and created a general sense of political hopelessness and helplessness. The House of Commons no longer controls the Executive, because the Party Machine controls the majority in the House. The elected representatives have been deprived of all independence and initiative, because "the Party Machine, through its instrument the Prime Minister," holds over their heads the threat of a General Election. The machine age in Parliamentary government began about 1880. It is significant, as Mr. Fyfe points out, that between 1832 and 1874 Ministries were defeated nine times by votes of their own supporters in the House of Commons, and that between 1874 and 1927 this has happened only once. Certainly the rigid discipline of modern Parties is incompatible with freedom and vigour of democratic government. It obstructs democratic action, but it acts even more disastrously upon political psychology by making members and electors feel that they are helpless parts of a vast machine, the levers of which are worked by some mysterious Caucus in the background. Political hope and enthusiasm die out of the multitude, and lethargy and distrust of parliamentary government destroy the psychological foundations upon which alone it would be possible to build a workable democracy.

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Some people will deny the truth of this diagnosis. But the recent parliamentary history of the Prayer-Book controversy is significant. Why was the House of Commons so much more alive during the debate and division on this Church question than it is when it is dealing with the most controversial Government Bills or proposals? Why were the lobbies thronged with the outside public and the galleries full? The answer is not that religious dogma and ceremonial are intrinsically more interesting to the public and Members of Parliament than other things. The ancient and almost mummified Mother of Parliaments became for a moment young and alive again because for once the Party steamroller was not set in motion; there was not the daily regimentation of obedient M.P.s into their respective lobbies, with the foregone conclusion that the "Ayes" or the "Noes" have it, as the case may be. Members, for once, became free representatives of their constituencies; their minds and votes were influenced by their convictions, by feeling in the constituencies, by argument in debate. The discussion was real, the debate free, and we watched with amazement what nowadays we hardly ever see—democracy, vigorous and alive, working in the House of Commons.

* * *

Whether the development of an all-powerful Party Machine is the main cause, or really only one of the effects, of the failure of parliamentary democracy, may be a question for argument. Mr. Fyfe, whose main concern is the future rather than the past or present of government, suggests one or two methods of rejuvenating Parliament. He would apparently curtail the power of the Prime Minister to demand a dissolution. If a Government Bill were defeated, the Government would not resign but drop the Bill out of its programme, and if a Minister were censured, it would drop that Minister out of the Cabinet.

LEONARD WOOLF.

REVIEWS

RETROSPECT

The Classical Tradition in Poetry. By GILBERT MURRAY. (Oxford University Press; Milford. 12s. 6d.)

ENGLISH poetry, one hears, is in a bad way. Every now and then someone, disgusted with what he sees going on around him, looks out into the future and writes a depressing little book to say that he really does not know where we are getting to. It is an excellent and heartening corrective to all this to turn the other way and look back on the road we have come. So far as Professor Murray's book is pure retrospect, pure exposition of the origin and essence of Greek drama and analysis of its influence on English tragedy and epic, it is something to be thankful for. The secret of success in writing of this sort is to span the distance, to connect, not merely an ancient manuscript with a modern one (a feat which Professor Murray notably accomplishes when he examines the similarities between "Orestes" and "Hamlet"), but a living man with a man who loved, suffered, wrote, and died thousands of years ago. Works of folk-lore research often have the opposite effect on the common reader. We feel, in reading them, the force of a clever deduction from obscure data. We agree that it is extremely probable that song and dance arose in this way or that. But it is all too far off, too academic, to matter. Everything is there but the deep thrill of realization that men and women did in fact begin their poetry in the blood and sacrifice of ritual. Thus while Greek tragedy is a size or two larger than contemporary life, the literature which seeks to explain it is often a size or two smaller. Professor Murray, as one would expect, restores the scale. In so far as he has made poetry in English out of ancient Greek poetry, he has a foot in the Athenian world. And so, when he writes of the *Molpè*, we do not yield a weary intellectual assent to the curious motion of tiny figures seen through the wrong end of a telescope. It is as if Professor Murray had been to a *Molpè* yesterday. He connects.

In another aspect, this book is one to bother over, to come at again and again, to argue about. It must have been difficult to write; it is certainly disturbing to read; and to review it adequately in a short space is impossible. For in it Professor Murray has contrived to raise, if not to answer, most of the savagely disputed questions in æsthetics. What, he asks, is tradition? What is the classical spirit? What are tragedy and comedy, romanticism and realism, metre and rhythm? In facing these, he has sidelong glances at the nature of truth, of beauty, and of reality; and he finally makes the grandest inquiry of all, what is poetry? The students of Harvard heard the substance of these matters from Professor Murray's lips. If they were wise and bold, they besieged him privately with argument, a course denied to the opinionated reader. Most of these chapters provoke argument. This is partly because Professor Murray has the gift, invaluable in a lecturer, of making sentences which are both clear and rich in overtones of unexpressed meaning. It is partly because the critical positions he maintains are often vulnerable to one who is bold enough to say that classical literature is only one of the springs of English poetry. But mainly it is because Professor Murray, while ostensibly facing backwards, is disapprovingly conscious the whole time of the present at his feet and uneasy concerning the future at his back. Professor Murray's poet must forget himself and "approximate to beauty" with an austere spirit. There must be no high-falutin' about self-expression and creation: Aristotle's "imitation" is a good, honest word, large enough to cover the poet's craft. He must strive for exact expression, severity of form and loftiness of diction. He must keep the metrical rules, read the great models, and uphold the tradition. This poet is not now discernible in large numbers. Instead of looking at the world, poets are looking at themselves and mumbling their miseries in most unrhythmic numbers. There is a litter of egotism, a rush for novelty, a chaos of undisciplined experiment. Now no reviewer of contemporary verse would deny that there is something in this. What is not so evident is that Professor Murray's counsel to tighten the bonds, return to strictness and reverence is really going to work. He has a beautifully apt parable of tradition, in which he analyzes the action of the English

gentleman in the Australian Bush who dressed for dinner every night to keep himself from going to the Bushmen. He does not himself return to this, but I hope I am not misrepresenting him in suggesting that his view of modern poetry and criticism is that they have got into an Australian bush and would be well advised to keep up the standards of the classical Old Country until they return. But suppose their exile is a permanent one? In that case the dinner jacket is not only inconvenient but ridiculous, and the only wise course is to seek a mode of living really suited to the new land. In the chaos of colonization, many will go roaring to the dogs. But under the shouting there may be quiet workers building a new commonwealth of poetry.

The perplexity in which Professor Murray's disapproval of modern laxness sometimes leaves the reader is particularly noticeable in his chapter on metre. He shows admirably how, in a crisply articulated, richly inflected language like Latin, the poets will weave beautifully intricate time-patterns within a set of fairly strict rules; and he contrasts this with the comparative poverty of metrical variety in English, which is poorly inflected and articulated and strongly accented. We scan more by stress than by quantity, and the result is that English poets seldom study metric theory, and are undismayed when they hear that the kymograph proves that "meadow" is iambic and "river" pyrrhic, not trochee. But when the principles of scansion are so obscure in application there is a natural tendency to attempt variety of rhythm at the expense of strict rules of metre or rhyme. The idea of rhythm involves the recurrence of a pattern, but not all the pattern need recur, nor need it recur regularly. There is boomerang danger in assuring a man who is working hard at a subtle rhythm outside the rules that his ear is incorrect. However, Professor Murray concludes:—

"Of course, there is a strong spirit abroad which tries to throw off rules and exactitude. It is proud of trusting not to measured feet, but merely to its ear, which is perfectly sound doctrine if the ear is correct, but not otherwise. Unfortunately, it hates a correct ear almost as much as a measured foot. Such a school, whether it makes merely for rough versification or definitely for *vers libre*, has its place and its justification in the progress of poetry; but the classical tradition will probably continue to look for advance by writing better and more carefully, not more carelessly and impatiently. No one can be sure that a method is wrong until it has been well tried; but it is difficult to expect good permanent results from one which is based predominantly on contempt for the practice of good poets, on self-assertion rather than worship, and on ennui rather than delight. . . ."

Well, that seems a little hard.

BARRINGTON GATES.

DON QUIXOTE INTERPRETED

The Life of Don Quixote and Sancho according to Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra. Expounded with Comment by MIGUEL DE UNAMUNO. Translated by HOMER P. EARLE. (Knopf. 21s.)

THE publishers of this volume compare it with "Sartor Resartus." There are indeed many resemblances between the two books. Both wrap a philosophy in a tissue of fantastic imagination; both are written for a specific time and against a specific contemporary view of the world. There are further resemblances. Unamuno, like Carlyle, shows in flashes a sort of laboured mysticism, a will, sometimes genuine, sometimes forced, to see mystery in everything. They both have a habit of accosting the reader and commanding him to wonder at this thing or that, but without having the ability always to evoke the wonder for him, as a poet would. Nevertheless the impression that Carlyle leaves is one of power, a power so native to him that not all his oddities and extravagances can suppress the evidences of it. In the present book, unfortunately, it is difficult to see anything more than a disappointed effort to achieve power through violence. The real difference between the two writers is that while Carlyle had a great imaginative and a great comic genius, Unamuno seems to have no trace of either.

But in turn of thought and moral temper he is often very like Carlyle. Again and again one comes on passages like this: "Don Quixote returned to the source of all strength: that is, he takes blanketeers and bruisers for *phantoms or beings of another world*. Rage not at what befalls thee in

this shadowy world; wait for the world of substance, or seize the substance now, from the depths of thy madness. That is the true faith and the deep one." This with all its faults of indefiniteness and over-emphasis might have come out of "Sartor Resartus"; but we feel that there, by virtue of Carlyle's imagination, which could "seize the substance" and seize equally those "phantoms or beings of another world," it would have had a deeper significance than Unamuno, lacking imagination, can give it. When Carlyle utters an oracular saying like this, there is always in the background his powerful imaginative evocation of human life to fill it out or to support it; whereas when Unamuno says the same thing, it is only an arbitrary affirmation to which we have to supply the meaning ourselves, if we do not simply dismiss it. There are indeed innumerable things in the book which only need a vivifying touch of imagination to make them striking and profound. For example, when the author comes to the point in the story where Don Quixote's spontaneous adventures end, and his exploits become artificial, "devised by the mischievous," he says finely: "Thy passion begins, and of the bitterest kind, the passion of mockery. . . . For this very reason thy adventures gain in depth what they lose in daring, for they are now witnessed by the world, in one way or another. It has been thy wish to make the world thy world, by righting its wrongs and establishing justice in it. But now the world receives thee and thy world is only a part of itself; thou art about to enter into the common life. Thou wilt become somewhat dequixotized, but only by quixotizing thy mockers. By force of laughter thou drawest them into thy following; they wonder at thee and then love thee." How finely that begins, and how sadly, unsupported by imagination, it ends in claptrap. "Thou wilt become somewhat dequixotized"—this horribly falsetto note is struck again and again, simply because the author recognizes that something more, something in the tragic vein, is demanded by the situation, and he cannot produce it. The falsetto sardonic note is almost always a sign of lack of power.

The thesis of the book is simple. It is that Don Quixote, in the eyes of the world committing blunder after blunder, setting free convicts to prey on society, bringing all sorts of inconveniences and hardships on his neighbours, is finally justified, and finally an inhabitant of "the world of substance." He is one of those who seize the substance now, from the depths of their madness. Though at first sight this thesis seems extravagant, and though it is made more extravagant by the author's deliberate exaggeration, properly worked out it might prove to be profound; and the riddle is how, starting with such an admirable intuition, Unamuno could write such a disappointing book. Seen as the author sets out to see him, Don Quixote is the universal representative, all the more moving for being a caricature, of the hero of all time, religious or secular. Like Don Quixote the hero brings misfortunes with him and does violence to all the ordinary temporal values of mankind; and the religious hero no less than the secular, Christ no less than Napoleon. Yet they are finally acclaimed; homage is done to their values, though those values are by every diurnal popular standard foolishness or worse. This is one of the many ideas behind Unamuno's interpretation of Don Quixote. As Don Quixote is seen, so the supreme heroes of legend and history may be seen; and seen thus simplified by caricature they are set in clear proportion and still given that involuntary admiration which seems to allow their claim to "the world of substance," and to call in question the ordinary values of humanity. But having lighted on this fine theme for a fable the author never works it out. He justifies Don Quixote's diverse hallucinations not by reference to one point, but by a succession of paradoxes, by taking up one position now and another the next moment, until one is hardly able to follow the shiftings of his mind. When nothing else is forthcoming he falls back on sentimental rhetoric: "Woman gives all her charity, benefits, and alms by virtue of the motherhood she feels. It was with motherly souls that these women of the town asked Don Quixote if he wanted anything to eat. See, then, how his madness changed them to virgins, since every woman when she is motherly is maidenly." Or he bursts into admonitions which somehow miss profundity: "If your neighbour comes to blows with rascals like himself, let them have it out, especially if they are sneaking away without

paying. Your meddling would be damage. Not when he believes he needs help, but when I believe it my duty to help him. Give no one what he begs of you, but what you think he needs. And then be patient with his ingratitude." Encumbered with all the interpretations which the author lavishes on him, and all the lessons he draws from him, Don Quixote emerges, indeed, not as a hero, but as a whole army of heroes, specially mobilized to set right Spain's abuses. One imagines that the book had an inspiring effect on the younger generations of Spain when it first appeared, in 1905. Its effect in this country must be less, not because we have not abuses sufficiently like Spain's, but because Unamuno's rhetoric is so different from ours that we cannot imagine he is using it with a serious political intention.

Yet when he writes without propagandist zeal he shows that he is an intellectual of considerable power, as his reputation would lead us to believe. Unfortunately the political purpose of the present volume does not allow him to do this very often. But he turns aside occasionally to jot a paragraph like this, for which one would gladly sacrifice all his exhortations: "The absolutely individual is the absolutely universal. . . . By successive eliminations one arrives at the social contractor of Jean Jacques, Plato's featherless biped, the *homo sapiens* of Linnæus, or the upstanding mammal of modern science, the man, by definition; who, as he is neither here nor there, neither of to-day nor aforetime, is not of any place or time. The result is *homo insipidus*. Thus the more we confine and constrict the action to limits of place and time, the more universal and enduring it becomes, provided that there be in it the spirit of eternity and infinity, a divine afflatus. The greatest falsehood in history is so-called universal history." But there are not ten pages out of three hundred as good as this, and one must assume that the book as planned did not give Unamuno's talents a chance. The translation, as the foregoing quotations show, is by turns very vigorous and rather awkward. It seems, on the whole, however, to be an honest and good piece of work.

EDWIN MUIR.



A

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JONATHAN CAPE LONDON

HARRIET MARTINEAU

Harriet Martineau: An Essay in Comprehension. By THEODORA BOSANQUET. *The Haslewood Books.* (Frederick Etchells and Hugh Macdonald. 15s.)

SINCE the early Victorian days when Harriet Martineau was in her prime many changes have come about in the world, and one of them has been marked by a revolution in the art of biography. Instead of the three heavy volumes in which the virtues of the famous used to be so respectably buried, we now get short and amusing studies in which the faults and idiosyncracies of the great find a place beside their talents and achievements, so that real human beings seem to stand out before us, instead of funereal monuments of marble.

Miss Bosanquet's new life of Harriet Martineau is in this respect completely modern. It is delightfully easy to read, and makes one laugh aloud more than once; it shows up the absurdities of the good lady in a most convincing fashion, and makes her conceit, her half-sham illnesses, her terrible flow of talk, and her love of domineering as real and familiar as similar tendencies among our living friends. Indeed it brings that extraordinary woman within the circle of our immediate acquaintance, and reveals to us most convincingly her sensations, her emotions, her thoughts, her dreams, and even their Freudian explanations! We grow familiar with her relentless energy, and with her tiresome mother; and as we follow her life in the pages of this book we are convinced that we know how and why it all happened as it did.

For all its sense of intimacy and reality, however, there is something left out, or perhaps, more strictly speaking, understated in the tale. The danger of writing of the dead as if they were still living is that one may forget the time in which they lived, and judge them according to standards which they themselves never knew. And when Miss Bosanquet mocks at Harriet's individualism, and treats the morals of her political tales with the scant respect with which the political world would treat them if they appeared to-day, this is what she is doing. After all, it was nearly one hundred years ago that those theories were held, and those doctrines preached by their author. It is an amazing economist, indeed, whose beliefs find followers after ten years; and Harriet Martineau has long been dead. What is strange about her writing is not that its content is old-fashioned, but that it nevertheless still lives. Her tales, her stories, her absurd autobiography, and her History of her own times, and even the leading articles she poured forth so continuously, are almost without exception readable and interesting even now; and those who do not stop short at Miss Bosanquet's book, but who trouble to turn back to Harriet Martineau herself will find themselves rewarded.

There is another direction in which Miss Bosanquet has underestimated the greatness of her subject. She has, indeed, told us of the physical and personal difficulties Harriet overcame, and she has indicated the volume and some of the value of the work she did, but she seems not to have realized how abnormal and amazing it was that a woman born in 1802 should have thought of making such a struggle or doing such work at all. The pressure upon women of the hampering conventions of the period was far more tremendous than the author seems to understand. Harriet herself understood well enough, and doubtless it played its part in hardening her conceit and sharpening her tongue when once she had overcome it; but modern women born to a freedom in which Harriet could only believe find it difficult to remember its crushing weight.

Harriet lent a hand to many of the great causes of her lifetime. She struck some hard blows for the liberation of slaves, the establishment of Free Trade, and the Repeal of the Game Laws; she helped Florence Nightingale to revolutionize nursing and Josephine Butler to repeal the Contagious Diseases Acts; but she did an even more important and individual thing. For by her own life and her own achievements, by her independent thinking and her vigorous writing, by her very vehemence and rudeness, and her own

peculiar personality, she forced forward the woman's movement at a time when there were very few to care for that cause. And this is perhaps the greatest claim upon the recognition of posterity of the "little deaf woman from Norwich."

If Miss Bosanquet has not made this claim, and has treated her subject a little too maliciously, she has yet added much to our knowledge and understanding of the woman. And, what is more, she has written a biography which is worth reading upon its own merits.

RAY STRACHEY.

RECOLLECTIONS OF INSANITY

Reluctantly Told. By JANE HILLYER. With an Introduction by JOSEPH COLLINS, M.D. (Wishart. 7s. 6d.)

THIS book purports to be a genuine autobiographical document—true in substance and in fact. It is the story, told in the first person, of a young woman, obviously of artistic sensibility and considerable intellectual capacity, who, becoming acutely insane, spent some years in American asylums, and eventually recovered. The narrative is concerned equally with the emotions and thoughts of the heroine, on the one hand, and with the asylum environment, personnel, and practices, on the other.

Even the least complacent among the judicious will be relieved to hear that this is not one more addition to the unhelpful, nebulous querulities to which sentimentalists have lately been inclined to lend an over-encouraging ear. Both implicitly and explicitly, Miss Hillyer criticizes many features of present-day asylum administration; but she shows wholesome appreciation of the peculiar difficulties inherent in the collective management of insane persons, and of the infinite patience, sympathy, and intelligence manifested by the greater number of those who nowadays control and administer mental hospitals.

The critical reader will regret the absence of any evidence that would be accepted by a Law Court as establishing the *bona fides* of the story as literal autobiography. One notes that even the American doctor who introduces Miss Hillyer's book does not commit himself further than to say that, "so far as I am able to judge," the "substance of the book" is a recollection rather than a work of imagination. But the most sceptical will agree that, in either case, we here have a vividly written, psychologically coherent, and plausible account of the probable emotional and material adventures of such a person as the writer—mentally denormalized—therapeutically dealt with as here narrated. The very literary effectiveness of the book may, indeed, persuade some readers that it is an artistic fabrication, rather than a simple report of personal experience. One may, for instance, reasonably doubt whether it is not to the author's dramatic sense rather than to the accuracy of her memory that we owe the account of her first realization of insanity, and the consequent dialogue which she held with the mirrored image of her mad self, questioning it as to the possible causes of the breakdown, the likely course of the malady, and the probable consequences, economic and social, with such diagnostic and prognostic accuracy. The book will probably read more convincingly if it be taken as a record of the observations and psychologic inferences of a shrewd and sympathetic looker-on, than if, on the assumption that it is unadorned autobiography, undue efforts are made to fit in so astounding a feat of memory with established truths of mental functioning.

In essence, I believe the book to be psychologically true; and, as it is interesting and holds the attention of the reader, it should do something to induce both doctors and laymen to adopt a truer view of mental aberration. It is commonly assumed either that insanity is a sort of mental death, or that it is characterized by a violent kink at some one point, the mental reflexes remaining otherwise perfectly normal. It is difficult to say which view is further from the facts. Leaving aside states of *amentia*, the mind of the insane person is often distinguished from the customary, much as might be the mind of a visitor from another planet with a different educational system and a fundamentally different social code.

HARRY ROBERTS.



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- ¶ At the end of this month Messrs. Chatto & Windus propose to issue the first volumes of a new series of inexpensive reprints of modern books, to be known as THE PHENIX LIBRARY. The books will be uniform in price (3s. 6d. net each cloth, 5s. net each leather) and design, and will embody features which are unique in any current series. Particulars will be found in the Preliminary Spring List, which is now obtainable post free.

ADVENTURES AND SUFFERINGS

A Voyage to the South Seas, 1740-1741. By JOHN BULKELEY and JOHN CUMMINS. (Harrap. 10s. 6d.)

The Narrative of Samuel Hancock, 1845-1860. (Harrap. 10s. 6d.)

NOTHING could be more bitterly amusing than the reflections of Richard Walter, chaplain of the "Centurion" and author of "Anson's Voyage," on the fitting out of the naval expedition to the South Seas in 1740. Land forces were needed. Anson was allotted "five hundred invalids to be collected from the out-pensioners of Chelsea College." Walter never forgave this, especially as only 259 aged warriors arrived, "for all those who had limbs and strength to walk out of Portsmouth deserted, leaving behind them only such as were literally invalids, most of them being sixty years of age, and some of them upwards of seventy." Walter's "Anson" is a noble work, from this indignant and forceful first chapter to the final brief triumph-song. "Thus was this expedition finished, when it had lasted three years and nine months, after having, by its event, strongly evinced this important truth—That though prudence, intrepidity, and perseverance united are not exempted from the blows of adverse fortune; yet in a long series of transactions they usually rise superior to its power, and in the end rarely fail of proving successful."

One of the episodes narrated with no less ease than energy by Walter was the loss of the ship "Wager," carrying field artillery and military materials, and the subsequent miseries, disputes, and main extinction of her company. Among the survivors was Byron's grandfather, author of "My Grandad's Narrative"—so that we have at least two distinguished works chronicling the catastrophe of the "Wager," and in "Don Juan" it is imaginatively revived. The account by Bulkeley, the gunner, and Cummins, the carpenter, has detail but not distinction, and even the detail is drab, disproportionate, and indifferently observed. The editor hints that a hack writer was employed to touch up this story, which was probably the fact; he had a crude and rambling journal to work on, and the book's momentary success depended on the public curiosity about naval mutiny and recrimination. If "Anson" were reprinted every ten years the reading world would be better off; but this reprint of an illiterate and, outside his trade, unintelligent man's notes on his adventures, though one agrees that they were strange adventures, is typical of the waywardness of much literary renovation.

Hancock's narrative is in a different case; his field is his own, and his manuscript has never been published hitherto. Mr. Howden Smith, who edits the series in which both Bulkeley and Hancock appear, speaks of this pioneer's story as "romance in the finest sense of the word." Romance is usually the quality of the mind that experiences rather than the thing experienced, and to the present reviewer Hancock's appeal is that of a practical and poised temperament, a fine morality, and an unobtrusive power of discernment and action. These characteristics are readable in his sustained, unadorned, but fully equipped narrative, which gives a lasting view of what could happen to a trader passing towards the north-west coast of America only eighty years ago—with a capricious punctuation of rifle shots.

"... ALSO AMONG THE PROPHETS?"

Proper Studies. By ALDOUS HUXLEY. (Chatto & Windus. 7s. 6d.)

THERE is the satirist who generalizes a conscious revulsion from his fellows: he is an introvert, sallying out from personal fantasies with more fear than indignation: like the wasp in autumn, he stings blindly at whatever real or imagined menace is nearest, and makes little attempt to rationalize his sting. Of this type were Catullus, Pope, and Swift. And there are the extravert satirists, Aristophanes, Dryden, and Juvenal, for instance, political by nature and poetical by accident, who are impelled to "scourge the town" by a more or less unconsciously sublimated conservatism. It has long been a matter of doubt to which of these types Mr. Huxley conforms. In the erudition and detail with which he has appeared to dissemble a general indignation against the age, he is nearest to Juvenal. But occasionally he has flashed out a piece of invective so stringent, per-

sonal, and venomous (one can almost feel the paper peeling off the walls) that it seems to put him in the category of Pope.

Mr. Huxley sets out as an amateur (he says) to clarify his own mind, and in the modest hope that the process may assist his readers to do the same. The eleven studies contained in this book are divided between religious, psychological, and politico-social topics. As an amateur he is bound to confine himself in the main to selection between the various paths already trodden out by the specialists. This task he performs admirably (with the exception of the essay on Education—an undistinguished performance); and he usually contrives some very interesting exploration of his own. One may dispute the utility of aiming slaps at such moribund figures as Behaviourism and the eighteenth-century theory of Democracy. But at least Mr. Huxley gets in some very shrewd ones.

The dualistic cast of Mr. Huxley's thought has already been suggested. He compares unfavourably the modern surrogates of religion—politics, art, business, and the other whelps of the "bitch-goddess" Social Success, with the Catholic faith: none of them can rival it in the comprehension of necessary paradoxes. Yet even the Catholic Church has failed, because of incomplete catholicity. At the same time, in the two most able of these studies, he examines intelligence and the discontinuity of mind, and decides that the first duty of man is the integration of the paradoxes of his personality. Granted that we are all either introverts or extroverts, that "there are no psychological Scandinavians or Swisss," each individual can still attain some framework of ideal sufficient to bridge over his mental discontinuities. Mr. Huxley is too detached to be pessimistic; but he is long- and sharp-sighted enough to stand as one of the few major prophets in a credulous age.

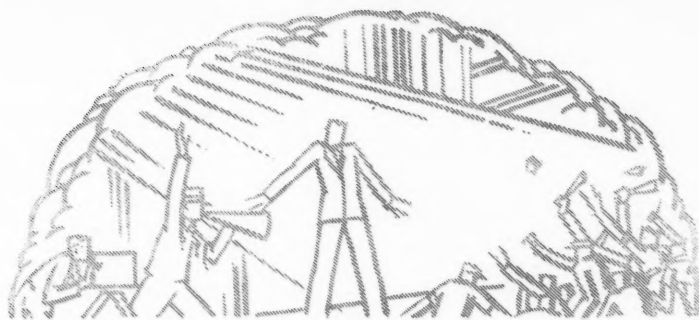
NOVELS IN BRIEF

Perilous Days. True Tales of Adventure. By DAVID MASTERS. (The Bodley Head. 8s. 6d.)

It must be confessed that Mr. Masters's themes are usually too great for his powers of handling them. Perkinness, sentimentality, and odd touches of jingoism are ill-suited to describe salvage feats and mining disasters. To make up for this, he has unbounded enthusiasm, he is in love with youth and strength; and everywhere, in the air, on the sea, under the earth, he perceives the sagacity, courage, patience, and endurance of men. Among air exploits, he describes Warneford's destruction of a Zeppelin near Ostend, Hawker's, Alcock's and Brown's, and Lindbergh's Atlantic flights, and the experience of the man who fell six miles, Major Schroeder, chief test pilot of the U.S. Army Air Service. He recounts mine disasters at Redding Pit, near Falkirk, in October, 1923, and at Killan Colliery, Swansea, in November, 1924; and the greatest of all mining calamities, that of Courrières, in the Pas de Calais coalfield, in March, 1906. The most moving of his tales is the story of how the open boats of the "Travessa" made their way to land over the Indian Ocean after the ship had gone down. Seamen, who not only have to face the dangers of nature but have also their men to govern, are still the greatest spirits in the world of physical adventure.

The Mob. By VICENTE BLASCO IBANEZ. (Thornton Butterworth. 7s. 6d.)

Isidro Maltrana, extraordinarily intelligent and talented, is subtle, indolent, and purposeless. Born in the slums of Madrid, he passes from an orphanage to the university, undertakes the most degrading literary hack-work for less than a bare living, forms a liaison with a factory girl, and, on the birth of a son, a purpose, a resolve to sacrifice himself for his child's future well-being, does at last come to him. The distinctive qualities of this novel should ensure its success with those who have little patience for recent technical developments in fiction and who are not too fastidious. The "canvas" is large and crowded, the interests many, the method dramatic. There is no denying a certain effectiveness. An impression of the capital emerges from a welter of words. There are the slums and the suburbs and the haunts of the young men of letters; there is a prison scene; there is an account of a poaching exploit in the royal park near the city—all done boldly in colour. The author's admirers will not be disappointed.



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The Death of a Poor Man. By FRANZ WERFEL. Translated by CLIFTON P. FADIMAN and WILLIAM A. DRAKE. (Benn. 6s.)

It is difficult to convey with what simplicity and compassion this story of the beauty which exists in squalor has been written. An old Austrian warehouse porter takes out a life insurance policy, the benefit of which will come to his wife and epileptic son only if his death takes place after his sixty-fifth year. Within a month or two of his birthday he falls sick and his end approaches rapidly. By a tremendous effort of will he succeeds in remaining alive until he has fulfilled the condition necessary for the payment of the insurance money which is to secure life itself for those he leaves. The old man is pitifully heroic. This account of poverty, of fallen "grandeur" is written in a subdued, poignant, yet not sombre manner. The translation is good, although the present tense should have been employed less frequently. Mr. Drake's praise of Franz Werfel would seem to be deserved.

THE PERENNIAL ANNUALS

THE bright red and gold annuals which flower so exuberantly every January are with us again, and their blooms grow bigger and bigger. First in order of precedence must be mentioned the three magnificent aristocrats among annuals, "Burke's Peerage, Baronetage, and Knightage, 1928" (Burke. £5 5s.), "Debrett's Peerage, Baronetage, Knightage and Companionage, 1928" (Dean. 75s.), and "Kelly's Handbook to the Titled, Landed, and Official Classes, 1928" (Kelly. 30s.). "Burke" is 102 years old, and in its 86th edition, and now has nearly 3,000 pages, excluding the "Guide to Relative Precedence" at the beginning of the book which occupies another 186 pages. The "Guide" is a fascinating list of persons, and it is almost incredible to see that there is someone No. 265,714 on the Table of Precedence. "Debrett" is in its 215th year, and has 3,360 pages. It contains interesting information in the Preface, e.g., a table showing the honours distributed yearly from 1878 to 1927. "Kelly" is in its 54th edition, and is a very handy book to use, considering that it deals with about 30,000 persons.

With "Who's Who, 1928" (A. & C. Black. 45s.) we descend or ascend from mere birth to distinction. It is rather less bulky than it was in 1927, but this reflects credit on its publishers, because, in fact, it contains more matter. And from distinction in "Who's Who" we come to the pure democratic equality of "Post Office London Directory with County Suburbs, 1928" (Kelly. 55s.), a monster of nearly 4,000 pages, a model of arrangement and accuracy for all directory makers.

Lastly there is "Whitaker's Almanack, 1928" (Whitaker. 6s.), which it is unnecessary to describe, for it is the friend and guide of nearly everyone who wants to know about the size of cities, the revenue of States, the names of ministers, civil servants, professors, or, in fact, about any "fact."

REVIEWS AND MAGAZINES

THE "Contemporary Review" has articles by Lord Meston and D. N. Bannerjee on "The Indian Commission." Albert Schweitzer writes in the same paper on "The Relations of the White and Coloured Races," where he studies the African Colour problem "as a peasant studies his cabbages, and not as an artist or a poet would depict the same cabbages. It is the point of view of the man who is in the work, who has to dig and sow and tend the plants." The result is an interesting article.

In the "Fortnightly," the late Sir Francis Piggott writes on "Compulsory Arbitration," and J. H. Harley has a paper called "A Plea for the Protocol." Another article on a League subject is "The Origin of the Mandates System," by David Hunter Miller in the American "Foreign Affairs." George Glasgow, in the "Contemporary Review," deals with "Vilna as Skeleton in the League's Closet." After a synopsis of events since the seizure of Vilna by Poland in 1920 up to the Council Meeting on the subject last month, he concludes:—

"War between Lithuania and Poland was never... a serious probability... by giving up 'the state of war' Lithuania let go of Vilna... Sir Austen Chamberlain after the Geneva meeting explained its 'success' as due to unanimity among the Great Powers. The spectacle of Great

Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Russia... unanimously agreeing that the weak must go to the wall may be good politics, but it is bad humanity... It is the way of the world that the weak and small must accept injustice and be given no redress, but it would have been a fine thing if the League of Nations, instead of bullying the injured weak had redressed her wrong. Still, peace at any price, even at the usual price, is something gained."

Mr. Robert Machray in "Poland, Lithuania, and the Baltic" ("Fortnightly"), is less cynical, and concludes his article with an appeal to Poland to make some concessions to Lithuania. "Is it utterly fantastic to ask whether Vilna itself, with its famous shrine of the Virgin, adored alike by both peoples, cannot be made a Holy City for Lithuanians as well as Poles?"

Other articles on Foreign Affairs are: "French Tariffs and French Colonies," by W. L. Middleton, and "The Enlarged Powers of the American President," by Lindsay Rogers ("Contemporary Review"); "The Soviet Tsars," by "Augur" ("Fortnightly"); "The Coming French Elections," by André Géraud (American "Foreign Affairs"); "Red Russia Turns Pink," by Lothrop Stoddard ("The World To-day"), and "The Dawes Plan, Inter-Allied Debts and Russia," by Ernest Remnant ("English Review").

In the "Hibbert Journal" G. N. Clark has a large subject—"The Causes of War," but he hardly does more than skirt its edges. André Michelin writes in the "English Review" on "Gas Warfare"; Colonel J. F. C. Fuller has an article in the "Nineteenth Century" on "Science and War"; Edward P. Warner in the "Yale Review" writes on "Aviation in 1927."

"The International Labour Review," the excellent organ of the International Labour Office, has an article by Jean Morellet: "At What Moment do the International Labour Conventions become Applicable?" and "Sickness Insurance at the International Labour Conference," by A. Tixier. There is also the second part of an essay by A. Stocker on "The Medical Aspect of Vocational Guidance."

The "American Mercury" and the "Yale Review" are two American arrivals this month. Gilbert Murray writes hopefully in the latter on "The Outlook for World Amity," and there is an article by André Maurois on "The Modern Biographer," in which he devotes, as he should, a good deal of space to an analysis of Mr. Lytton Strachey's methods.

Sinclair Lewis, in the "American Mercury," has a conversation, or rather a monologue, in a Pullman Car, by "The Man who Knew Coolidge." It is amusing, but, and this seems to be a common fault in American journalism, there is far too much of it. Obviously a bore in fiction should never be allowed to bore us. There is a rather sickeningly competent account of an execution—"A Californian Holiday," by Jim Tully, and Joseph Hergesheimer writes on James Branch Cabell.

The most important contribution to this number of the "Monthly Criterion" is a poem by T. S. Eliot. J. M. Robertson writes on "Burns and his Race," there is an "Italian Chronicle," by G. B. Angioletti, and a "Dramatic Chronicle," by F. S. Flint. Last month in this column, and with reference to the same paper, by an error in copying, D. H. Lawrence's essay, "Flowery Tuscany," was attributed to Bonamy Dobrée, who had contributed a comprehensive survey of the work of Rudyard Kipling.

The "Cornhill Magazine" has an article on "The Political Novel," by H. A. L. Fisher, and "When We Two Parted": a Byron Mystery Resolved," by John Gore.

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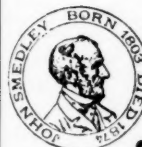
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FINANCIAL SECTION

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

A REVIEW OF MARKETS—INVESTMENTS IN TIN AND RUBBER—OIL—GRANGESBERG.

ASSUMING that the Stock Exchange is intelligent in its anticipations, that market prices are a reliable barometer of business sentiment, and that index numbers of selected security prices mean something—a series of awful assumptions—it is significant that the INVESTORS' CHRONICLE index for business security prices (covering all home industries, except railways, banks, and insurance) showed a fairly steady rise of 16 points throughout 1927 until at December 31st it stood for the first time since 1923 at a higher figure than the index of all speculative securities (gold, land, nitrates, oil, rubber, tea, and tin). Speculation obviously has forsaken the speculative markets, whose industries are depressed, for the commercial, where a number of new or reviving trades are presenting the better gambles. Artificial silk and gramophones began the movement. The index for silk shares (100 = December 31st, 1923) rose from 158.1 to 214.8 during the year. Judging by the encouraging report of Austin Motor prosperity, motor shares will carry the movement further. With motors, Triplex Glass may now be decently included, seeing that an official statement of its contracts has been published. The growth of the chemical industry is reflected by the rise in the index for chemical share prices from 110.7 to 170.4 in the twelve months. Gas and electricity shares are up by nearly 14 points. Before long we may have an index number for film studio shares if that new industry develops on sound lines. Then there is the partial eclipse of cables by wireless. In the last ten days the sharp rise in Marconi ordinary shares to 52s. 6d. has been the "sensation" of the industrial market. Marconi International Marine shares which we previously recommended at about 80s. as a safer way of participating in the Marconi "gold rush," have jumped to nearly 40s. With so many new developments in domestic industries, with the amount of new issues for domestic trade purposes last year double the amount in 1924, it is small wonder that speculative interest should be centred on the "commercial and industrial" markets of the Stock Exchange. There should be scope for making money out of the new kind of industrial revolution that seems to be in progress.

The speculative markets will not always be depressed. We have given our reasons for expecting some recovery this year in rubber and tin. As a means of investing in the rubber industry without incurring the risks incidental to tropical enterprises in general, and rubber in particular, there is no better purchase than Rubber Trusts at 41s. 9d. to yield 8 per cent., or Harrisons & Crosfield deferred shares at 8½ to yield 14.4 per cent. The revenue of the latter company is derived chiefly from agency fees, but the shares are certain to receive more attention if the price of rubber improves. Investments in the tin share market are more difficult. For producing companies Northern Nigeria (Bauchi) 10s. participating preference shares at 34s. 6d. to yield on 60 per cent. dividends 17 per cent., and Malayan Tin Dredging 5s. shares at 29s. to yield 9½ per cent. on a 55 per cent. dividend, are leaders in the Nigerian and Eastern groups respectively. The shrewd speculative investor, however, often prefers the shares of companies that have not yet reached the full production stage. In the development period, if things go well, everything is "prospect," and buyers should predominate. For example: Toyo Tin, Kampar Malaya, and Northern Tavoy all start their full

production programme at different dates in 1928. Toyo Tin 10s. shares at 14s. should earn 33 per cent. with tin at £250 per ton. This Company is working some rich lode deposits in Japan. Associated Tin Mines of Nigeria 5s. shares at 23s. 6d. cum dividend of 2s. 6d. are also attractive in view of the report recently issued. These four companies belong to the well-managed Anglo-Oriental group, and their shares among others are largely held by the Tin Selection Trust, which has just increased its dividend from 12½ per cent. to 16½ per cent.

* * *

As regards the oil share market we can see no signs of any early recovery. It may take a year before the oil industry emerges from the slough of over-production. The new shallow fields in West Texas, a State which seems to be, like Persia, a huge limestone reservoir of oil, the discovery of oil sands below 6,000 feet in Californian fields, the prolific Maracaibo Lake in Venezuela where a dry hole has never yet been drilled, not to mention the Seminole field where they are still restricting development—all these sources of production point to continued depression in the oil markets. Shell Union last year only earned one-third the amount it earned in 1926, and its cash bonus of 60 cents has not been repeated with the dividend of \$1.40 per share per annum. Shell Transport in the circumstances may have to reduce its rate of dividend from 25 per cent. to 22½ per cent. tax free. Lobitos has passed its interim dividend and would do well to pay 15 per cent. for the year. Some hopes are set on "oil conservation" in the United States. If you conserve oil, you restrict production; if you restrict on a big scale you raise prices. Does anyone suppose that any Presidential candidate will get elected on the cry of dearer oil?

* * *

Grängesberg iron ore shares (100 kr.) have recently fallen from 360 to 333 kr. because the Stockholm market was disappointed with the 1927 dividend. They expected 20 per cent., but received the same as in 1926, namely, 17 per cent., which allows a yield of 5.12 per cent. at present prices. The Company could have paid more, but it preferred to settle certain Government claims in a lump sum. It is a long story. Briefly, Grängesberg Trafikakbolaget owns all the shares in the railways between Oxelösund and Grängesberg, all the shares in Grängesberg Gruve iron ore mines in Central Sweden, and half the shares in Luossavaara-Kiirunavaara which owns the famous iron-ore deposits at Gellivare and Kiruna in North Sweden (Lapland). The Swedish State, as owner of that part of Lapland, holds the other half of the Luossavaara-Kiirunavaara shares. The relations between State and Grängesberg have been the subject of perpetual discussion. Under the 1927 agreement the State retains the right to redeem the Grängesberg shares in Luossavaara-Kiirunavaara, while the State's share in Luossavaara-Kiirunavaara are to participate equally with those held by Grängesberg, instead of receiving as before fixed dividends by way of royalty. In 1926 the Grängesberg income from Luossavaara-Kiirunavaara was 21.8 million kroner and the State's only 2.5 million kr. Moreover, Grängesberg had to surrender to Luossavaara-Kiirunavaara certain plant and iron fields which necessitated a writing down of seven million kroner in the Grängesberg balance-sheet. But Grängesberg secures an increase in the ore exportable allowance, and has recently taken over certain mines in Central Sweden from another big company (Stora Kopparberg) which will have the same effect. Hence Grängesberg profits may after all increase. In Sweden Grängesberg shares are regarded as a "gilt-edged" industrial investment, being controlled by the Kreuger interests.

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